





THE
ANTI-CRITIC

FOR

AUGUST 1821, AND MARCH, 1822.

CONTAINING

LITERARY, NOT POLITICAL, CRITICISMS,
AND OPINIONS.

BY

SIR EGERTON BRYDGES, BAR.^T



GENEVA,
PRINTED BY W. FICK.

MDCCCXXII.

~~~~~  
(75 Copies.)

ff





## P R E F A C E.

---

THE Reader has here a *Melange* of Counter-Criticisms ; and other Fragments ; — of what value , he will decide according to his taste.

The range of Literature is now become so extensive , that new combinations present themselves in every form. If the memory be heavily taxed by this abundance, the judgement also is still more in demand. Without the guide of some simple principle, it is impossible to have even a confused recollection of the conflicting literary opinions , which meet us every successive month.

As « *Libertas sine scientia licentia est* » so it is with Criticism. It is a dangerous weapon in the hands of the half-learned ; or of those, who want sincerity and integrity. It is so easy to give a pausable appearance to either censure or praise , that much , after all , must depend upon authority ! The *dictum* of a well-read scholar who speaks conscientiously , is better than the most ingenious and powerful argument of one not known to be sincere !

But as this Volume is not confined to Criticism, something may be required to be said of the Fragments and Miscellanies, which are intermixed; or rather appended. All the apology that can be made is, that this Book was found a convenient repository for preserving them. As the work is principally intended for gratuitous distribution among the Author's friends, he conceives that he is fully justified in having taken this liberty. They who care nothing about *Family History*, may easily pass over the pages of *Epitaphs* and *Inscriptions*.

A great deal is said about the evil of multiplying Books. This may be an evil to the few, who think themselves obliged to read; yet do not like reading. It can scarcely be an evil to any one else: and *these* are people, who surely deserve little consideration. All others may, if they will, decline, not only to read, but to buy. The ill consequences therefore of a work not in demand, or not useful, whether from want of merit, or want of fitness to the prevailing taste, all rest with the author, or his publisher, subject to the above exception.

But though unquestionably the number of superfluous publications is very great, nothing can be so untrue as that we have already books enough. The major part of Books are

compiled by those , who have no powers of thinking. Yet of these a large part may be useful , and even necessary ; because the same materials may require to be revived , differently placed , or newly combined. But of those who can think for themselves , and think vigorously , or even ingeniously , the labours can never be unprofitable. Innumerable sentiments , and innumerable nice distinctions in morals , politics , *etc.* , yet remain undeveloped ; and they , who unite to the rare capacity for such tasks the still rarer combination , with it , of exercise , culture , and practised facility of performance , neglect their talents and their duties , if they pass their lives in the languor and inaction of silence. It is seldom , till after middle life , spent in writing as well as in reflection , that , in prose at least , an author obtains that frankness and mellowness of style , which enables him to convey original thoughts in a clear and interesting manner. Few can go alone ; few exercise any other faculty than memory ; and of the few who do , the proportion is very small , of those who can find language for their own thoughts.

If it be objected , that no thoughts , however original , and however well expressed , will justify publication , in a detached and fragmental form , it may perhaps be answered , that , though

method and system may, and ought to be, the final result, yet, for the elucidation of truth, the materials are best collected separately, as they occur: for nothing produces more narrow and erroneous views, than to *set out* with systems; though a certain class of literati, calling themselves *philosophic*, pride themselves so much upon this mode of disciplining their minds!

Thoughts, that must wait their turn, till their place in the system calls them forth, lose all their freshness; and appear at last *pressed* into the form, which suits the system-monger's purpose. He who speaks from the fulness of his conviction or his heart, at the moment when the conviction or the sentiment has been impressed upon him, has a force and frankness in the communication, which bears with it its own evidence. The ceremonial language of an author, writing by rule, and composing solely with a view to public passport, is, (like the conversation of a Courtier, who spends all his life in societies in which he is upon his good behaviour) empty; and unmeaning; — *vox, et præterea nihil!* — For this reason, we look into the private letters of eminent men with so much curiosity, anxiety, and interest. The language of the heart is always the same: it is the artificial language of *technical literature*,



which changes ! Not all the genius of DANTE himself would have made him blaze , as he does , to all posterity , but for this ! It was this, that threw off the rust of antiquity ! it was this that anticipated the language of centuries !

And now that , with a mind never at rest , reaching at a thousand unattainable objects , waisting his strength in pursuit of a diversity of knowlege , when a single branch may be too much for his powers ; — with a decaying constitution , and a desponding heart ; verging towards the completion of his sixtieth year ; — the Author presents this volume among the numerous crude fruits of his daily occupation , the few readers , into whose hands it may fall , must take it as they will , without farther deprecation of their censure ! The Author has lived too long to expect praise ; or even the avoidance of disapprobation. Who is bold enough to judge for himself ? All the world who concern themselves with books , literary and unliterary , swear by some leader ! If the spirit of *political* Liberty has spread in these days , even the *wish* for *literary* liberty has ceased in the world : and there is a tame and entire submission to literary *servitude* , which does not even excite a murmur ! but what is most curious is , that this dominion is usurped , not by literary , but by *political* despots !

That we are « fallen on evil days , » that erudition and sound sense have ceased ; that if a few instances of extraordinary genius occur, they have become dangerous by their eccentricities ; that in some of the main departments of literature there is not even an attempt to produce any fruit ; that Criticism above all has become frightfully mischievous and wicked, by audacious intrigue, audacious disregard of integrity, and audacious charlatanism ; that the public mind is corrupt, frivolous, and servile, to an unexampled degree — are truths so incontestable, as not to be disguised by applying to them the unjust appellation of *morbid querulousness* !

The materials, which offer themselves to be worked upon by the human mind, are necessarily multiplied in an infinite degree beyond those of former times. Five hundred authors could scarcely, by a dedication of their whole lives, master *literary history* alone. Yet pert witlings of yesterday, who scarcely know the title of a work beyond their own nation and their own time, affect to pronounce critical judgments on subjects, which require the most profound knowledge and profound taste, such as can only be attained by the most extended inquiry, and the most extended comparison ! All the wisdom of ages is to them dead lumber ;

and the groaning shelves of mighty Libraries,  
had better, in their opinions, be

*« Purged by the sword, and purified by fire ! »*

Frightful and overwhelming masses, which reproach their ignorance, and destroy their vivacity ! How happy for the world to be rid of them ; and be suffered to think for itself ; — without prejudice ; — unshackled and unburdened ; — as light ; — but, alas, a little more empty ! —

---

Ye mighty Dead, whose souls in magic spell  
Inscribed upon the dingy pages dwell,  
And ranged on groaning shelves in close-piled rows,  
In sad sepulchral dust and damp repose,  
How dread the silence, that, with brooding wings,  
O'er you a deathlike melancholy flings !  
Pent in the closed leaves the smother'd fire,  
Spite of its struggles, ceases to respire !  
Your oracles are dumb ; your gifted lore  
Teaches a dull, benighted world no more !  
To other sounds their ears attuned ; their eyes  
Far other marks of mental vision prize !

Perchance e'en HE, whose humble accents strive  
From your past notes some vigour to derive,  
Neglected e'en in life ; condemn'd in vain,  
Amid unhearing crowds, to raise the strain ;  
In death companion of your mournful doom,  
Shall soothe his spirit by congenial gloom,

Placed mid your ranks, his hovering ghost shall try  
To turn to triumph chill Oblivion's sigh;  
And back upon the scorner throw the scorn,  
That long with such indignant pride was borne!

---

To form a due taste, and proper judgement of excellence, in the art of painting, a familiar acquaintance with the works of the old Masters is universally acknowledged to be necessary. Why should it not be so in literary composition? The old Masters in Painting were not more superior to the present, than the authors of former Centuries to those now flourishing! Scholarship, labour, novelty, energy, warm hope, freedom from the poisonous blights of malignant technical Criticism, all contributed to furnish the means of a great preeminence. Few but charlatans now meet with encouragement. Charlatanism is become almost necessary to engage the vitiated taste of the Public.

But the charlatanism of literary Journals far exceeds that of all other publications. At the same time it cannot be denied, that one or two of them occasionally put forth most eloquent and most profound emanations of critical discussion — no doubt, a little exaggerated and overwrought; — for their praise, like their censure, pays little regard to limits; and they cannot be said to be economisers of either



the one, or the other ! Sometimes an author is lifted up, that they may shew with what an abundant richness of ingenuity they can say fine things : but more often he is cried down, that they may enjoy the vent of a bitter jest ; or of more bitter raillery ! —

MURETUS has the following passage, which shews how like one age is to another.

*« Ætas nostra mirificam quandam extulit vim hominum improborum, qui magnam laudem in obtreptione positam putant, neque quicquam cupidius faciunt, quam ut quicquid possunt, quacunque ratione possunt, ex aliena gloria deterant, creduntque ita se demum emersuros, si eos qui extant, depresserint. Quam rationem grassandi ad famam nemo umquam sapiens approbavit.»*

M. Anton. Muretus. *Variar. Lection. Lib. i. cap. vi.*

Geneva, 25 April 1822.

---

« Vos tandem , haud vacui mei labores ,  
Quicquid hoc sterile fudit ingenium ,  
Jam sero placidam sperare jubeo  
Perfunctam invidia requiem , sedesque beatas ,  
Quas bonus Hermes ,  
Et tutela dabit solers Roüsi ;  
Quo neque lingua procax vulgi penetrabit , atque longe  
Turba legentum prava facesset :  
At ultimi nepotes ,  
Et cordatior ætas ,  
Judicia rebus æquiora forsitan  
Adhibebit , integro sinu.  
Tum , livore sepulto ,  
Si quid meremur sana posteritas sciet ,  
Roüsio favente. »

*Joannes Miltonus ad Joannem Rousium , Oxoniensis Aca-*  
*demie Bibliothecarium, 1646. ( Inter Poemata Latina. )*

---

---

---

# THE ANTI-CRITIC.

AUGUST 1821.

## I.

### INTRODUCTORY. CHARACTER OF MODERN CRITICISM.

---

**E**XAGGERATION, studied piquancy, partiality, envy, ignorance, affectation, bad taste, political, national, sectarian, and personal interests, with private intrigue, all pervade and debase even the best periodical Criticisms of the present day.

These works are now become mere manufactures of trade; and are addressed rather to the passions, capacities, and acquirements of the multitude, than of the learned world.

Instead of *intermingling* the notice of Publications of a temporary nature, these Journals admit scarcely any thing else; and the writers live so much within the atmosphere of factitious interests, that they can judge of nothing with the calmness calculated to establish permanent opinions.

Voyages, Travels, Pamphlets on the transient politics of the day, dull discussions of professional science in which men are endeavouring to force themselves into distinction for the purpose of aiding their professional advancement, engross the place of elegant literature; of what increases our moral knowledge; ameliorates the heart; and exalts the fancy.

Nothing is more certain, than that our literature is at present highly corrupt. It is an incident to the stage of society, at which we have arrived; and whoever doubts it, has so far vitiated his taste, as to be insensible to the beauty of simplicity and chaste colouring. Every thing is now *got up* ( to use a vulgar and technical phrase ), *for effect!* All is bought; and the publisher pays in proportion as the article is striking, and full of glare! It is boasted, that these Critics lead the public taste:— they are its slaves: they follow it; — often in chains; — and lick the dust of its heels! They delight to foment its prejudices; and pander to its degrading appetites.

I know not that Criticism has taken so caustic and sophisticated a character in any other part of Europe, as in England. But the popular literature in all tends to the same extravagance and hyperbole. This is exemplified in Mad. de Stael, who was gifted with a very extraordinary force of mind, but whose style and thoughts surely much abound in factitious vehemence and laboured grandeur; and whose invention does not appear to me to have been her primary quality.

What is wise and true, leaves us in a state of calm pleasure, and gentle reflection: it neither exhausts, nor satiates. Oratory ought to chastise itself by the models of the more sedate operations of the closet: but the closet now borrows the heat and intemperance of the senate and the forum. Criticism is in the hands of the turbulent agitators of faction, and practical society.

Of any age, the number of Literati whose memories survive them, is small. Many of their names may be inscribed in the voluminous Biographies, which are loaded with the registry of obscure men: but there they lie buried and unnoticed.



All those secondary talents, which borrowing the ideas of others, adapt them to the subject that occupies the attention of the hour, and thus obtain a false interest to efforts which possess no original and enduring merit, soon fade from the public observation; and if, when the occasion is past, we recur to these performances, we are astonished that they could ever have excited even a temporary notice.

So long as Literature is open to all these adscititious avenues to Fame, the temple will be filled with false aspirants, who will occupy the places, that ought to be held by Genius and unaffected Learning.

Among the rarest merits of writing is simplicity. It requires a native abundance, or an unfailing native strength, which few have ever possessed. Artifice is used, when the funds of Nature are deficient. As long as the thought prevails over the mind, the dress of language is little considered: it is the form in its own naked force, that occupies the mental eye. But penury of conception or sentiment often resorts to the trick of verbiage. I could mention authors, some of whose popular poems are nothing but a pretty dance of words. They convey neither sentiments, nor ideas. But never yet was there intrinsic merit in a passage, where an author was not sincere in the sentiments which he expressed.

Though the operations of Genius and of Memory are often confounded, no two powers can be more unlike in their natures and effects. One is cold as the borrowed light of the Moon: the other has all the genial and creative warmth of the Sun. One relates an impression from the recollection of its signs: the other from its visionary presence.

Useful as the Memory is in bringing forward and arran-

ging what exists, it can *add* nothing to the existing stores. It is by the lamp of Fancy that we penetrate to the altar of the heart; and behold its rites and its movements irradiated before us. It is thus that we illustrate the science of morals; and advance the noblest of all philosophy.

---

## II.

### [ ON THE PREVAILING ENGLISH OPINIONS ON POETRY.

---

It may perhaps be asserted, that there has been little pure, simple, and consistent Criticism on Poetry in England since the death of Addison, more than a century ago. Almost all periodical Criticism, being conducted by those who have worked on it as a task, has been principally under the direction of artificial systems, of one kind or another. It requires so much less native taste, and native acuteness, to discover this technical merit, that this preference is the inevitable result in those who are drawn to the subject by constraint rather than by inclination.

The question regarding the comparative genius of Pope, which *Joseph Warton* brought before the Public nearly seventy years past, has been again revived: and with some advantage in carrying back the inquiry into the first principles of this Art. Pope is altogether an Author, through whom the question may be fairly discussed.

I shall not begin with a definition of Poetry, because,

as Johnson says, definitions are dangerous; and as it would commence with a formality, which on the present occasion I am desirous to avoid.

It is the idea of mystery; the supposition that it involves something distinct in its nature from the truths which are proper for prose, that leads to all the erroneous opinions, and all the corrupt taste on this subject. No rational man can doubt that Pope was a great poet: the only question is, whether all his poetry was of an high class; and whether the multitude do not estimate him by his worst rather than his best productions!

Narrowness is the sin of the English taste in Poetry: — but not the only one! It loves extravagance, and false glitter; and mistakes distortion for genius! So that it not only excludes a great deal of the best from the character of true poetry; but what it admits is mostly false! —

It may not be difficult to account for this, if we look to the manner, in which the public mind is led: — but it would perhaps be invidious. —

That, which surprises me is, that a single age can consider itself to have the fate of the fortunate Beings, who for the first time have come to the true light! If it is correct, almost all that has been deemed genius and poetry from the time of the Greeks and Romans, through all the scholars of Italy and the rest of Europe at the Revival of Learning, down almost to the close of the last Century, must be proscribed! We must take the *Universal Biography*, and erase the names of more than *nine tenths*, of those who stand recorded there as *Poets*! A mind, not of overweening conceit, would hesitate at this! It would pause to enquire, if our predecessors are not as likely to have been right as ourselves; it would doubt, if the principle could be accurate, which should exclude so much pleasure, and so much instruction: it would

seek for some broader limits, and some essences of a more enlarged nature!

A small degree of ingenuity would suffice to discover them. Poetry is nothing more confined, than a *forcible and harmonious representation of the lively movements of a powerful mind!* It is a picture : — yet a picture, not of *matter*; but of the *mental impression*, whether of matter, or idea, or sensation; or all united!

Mere versification does not constitute poetry, because the thought may be trite, or false; and cold and lifeless. But a moral axiom, when conceived with energy, and expressed with force, is poetry, if conveyed in rhythmical language! Some of Shakespeare's finest passages are of this kind : and this may be observed also of Spenser, Milton, Cowley, and Dryden! In truth, in the walks of Poetry, no one ever continued the favourite of ages, whose productions did not comprehend the merits of a moral poet!

INVENTION is said to be the first quality of Poetry : But not the invention, which

*Humano capiti cervicem jungit equinam,  
Undique collatis membris.*

On what is the species of Invention, which entitles the possessor to a place in the first class of Genius; to what extent it is necessary; from what causes it arises; and wherein it may be dispensed with; the progress of this Paper will develop my opinions.

The radical mistake in the fashionable mode of thinking upon this subject, is the assumption that that part of the Intellect, distinguished as *Understanding*, or *Reason*, is no active or necessary quality in the production of good poetry. The *Understanding*, without *fancy* or *sensibility*, is not sufficient : but still it is an indispensable ingredient. Truth is as much the foundation of poetry, as of Philoso-

phy; though the former may take different modes of representing it from the latter.

It would open too wide a field to enter here into abstruse *psychological* discussions :— What is fancy; whence it is supplied; or how far it represents, or is intended to represent, with exactness, material objects, are even yet in some degree questions of doubt and darkness (1).

A conclusion of the Understanding, drawn from memory; and separated from the mental presence of the image, or the sentiment, that gave birth to it, is not poetry.

But if poetry be the result of the highest riches of the mind, composed from internal, as well as external sources, augmented by its own labour and activity, how could any Critic even dream that an image drawn from the combined effects of natural materials and human genius, is in every case inferior to a simple image of external nature? Lord Byron has asked with as much truth as wit, « is not the image of a large ship under sail more poetical than an hog sailing in an high wind? » If the latter were deemed superior, it might as well be said, that the image of a man in a barbarous state is more poetical, than of a man cultivated by education; and refined by politeness. Providence has left to human Beings to do much for themselves; and by their own exertions to train and expand into excellence the powers bestowed on them!

To contend that poetry is excellent in proportion as it is an exact representation of an external image, even though it should be added that this image must be magnificent or beautiful, is to lower poetry far below Painting; and absolutely to lay aside its primary quality, its *intel-*

(1) See Bonstetten's *Recherches sur la nature et les lois de l'Imagination* : and his latest publication, *Etudes de l'homme, ou Recherches sur les facultés de sentir et de penser*. Genève 1821; 2 vol. 8.º

*lectuality!* — How often do we hear it said of a specimen of a modern poem : « *How exquisite! — It is quite a picture!* » Again of some of the noblest passages of our elder poets. — « *O these are no poetry! They want imagery, and description!* » Take a passage, at hazard, from the xi<sup>th</sup> Book of *Paradise Lost* — one of Adam's answers to the Angel Michael revealing the future to him :

« O visions ill foreseen! Better had I  
 Lived ignorant of future! So had borne  
 My part of evil only, each day's lot  
 Enough to bear; those now, that were dispensed  
 The burden of many ages, on me light  
 At once, by my foreknowledge gaining birth  
 Abortive, to torment me ere their being,  
 With thought that they must be. Let no man seek  
 Henceforth to be foretold, what shall befall  
 Him, or his children; evil he may be sure,  
 Which neither his foreknowing can prevent;  
 And he the future evil shall no less  
 In apprehension than in substance feel,  
 Grievous to bear; but that care now is past;  
 Man is not whom to warn: those few escaped,  
 Famine and anguish will at last consume,  
 Wandering that watery desert; I had hope  
 When violence was ceased; and war on earth,  
 All would have then gone well; peace would have crown'd  
 With length of happy days the race of man;  
 But I was far deceived; for now I see  
 Peace to corrupt no less than war to waste.  
 How comes it thus? Unfold, celestial guide,  
 And whether here the race of man will end. » —

It is, no doubt, the business of poetry to carry us into the fields of Imagination : but not into the fields of childish,



tawdry, and factitious Imagination! It is our business to imagine Beings consistent with the probability of their supposed natures: we are however to imagine, or invent, not only their material forms; but also their intellectual structure; their thoughts, and feelings!

We are taught to survey this beautiful globe of inanimate objects with a Poet's eyes, when he enables us to associate with it those sentiments and those visions, which his tremulous heart and plastic fancy furnish. In the temple of his mind is built up a spiritual world, which if it draws something from external matter, draws more from its own inward fountains. It delights to give vent to the fullness of this splendor by communicating to others portions of this magic imminglement! But these associations must always be in sympathy with the feelings and perceptions of our general nature. If they arise from peculiar habits; or from extravagant or forced trains of thought, they will find no echo but in the few and sophisticated bosoms, which seek after novelty at the expence of truth.

It ought to excite no wonder, that a true Poet is a very rare Being, when we reflect on all the various and high qualities of nature, and also the cultivation, toil, and opportunity, which it requires, to make one! Of those in whom all these singular gifts and circumstances unite, probably at least two thirds are silenced by cold and cruel discouragement. The calamities of Life, to which this class are from their temperaments and habits extraordinarily exposed, extinguish the fire and debilitate the genius of others!

But another cause has been in operation for a frightful length of time, which perhaps has not been less destructive to the fruits of the real poet than these! It is false criticism; and a vicious taste in the public, which deems absurdity a proof of genius; and what is original because

it is monstrous, excellent because it is new! The sensitive disposition of him, whose endowments fit him for a Poet, often makes him in youth timid and self-diffident. He is turned from his natural ambitions; and attempts to enter a path, where he finds a loathing at every step. He can do nothing in the line of *supposed* excellence pointed out to him: he begins to doubt his powers; and sinks into despondence.

How little is there of solid excellence, of the genuine ore, in most of the English Poets of fame — (at least of temporary fame,) — who have died in the last thirty years. They have as little applicable to the illustration of high morals, as they have of powerful and extended invention! I put Beattie and Cowper among the first: but Beattie was perhaps too much cried up in his day; and has been too much neglected since. His *Minstrel* already flags sadly in the second Book: and yet it is a Poem less than half finished; leaving all the main part, in which the trial of genius would have been placed, undeveloped. It is the religious Sect to which Cowper belonged, that has given him an extraneous popularity. Yet he had much of the ore of a true poet; though he was sometimes flat and insipid; and sometimes sickly. The seclusion caused by his morbid health had been a bar to those diversified mental riches, which give full vigour to genius. In the last forty years he had neither read enough; nor knew enough of what was passing in the world.

What shall we find in the most modern poetry of England, either to exemplify great moral truths, or to develop those magnificent or beautiful visions, which are the continual visitants of high fancies? How is our knowledge of the secret movements of the human heart improved by it?

It is the pursuit of false beauties, which is the bane of these productions. — Their inventions, are not fictions to

illustrate Truth ; but to set up Falsehood ! This is the species of originality, which they seek ; and in which they succeed. They are unlike, therefore, those who have preceded them, *ex necessitate rei* ; for diversity, not propriety or probability, is their aim. The readers then, who contract a habit of admiring them, must, by obvious consequence, believe that *they* for the first time have discovered the genuine fountain of Poetry !

It is the wrong meaning attached to the word *Fiction*, which perpetually misleads the poetical theorist, and the Public who follow his dogmas. It is assumed, that *Fiction* means something different from what exists in the material or intellectual world : — indeed for the most part the latter is forgot ; and it is supposed that it can only refer to the former. What is it ? Not a *copy* of an *individual* archetype ; but *invented* as an illustration of the *genus* ! If it illustrates no *genus* ; — but solely the capricious combinations of the author's head ; wherein is its value ? It wants one of the primary ingredients of poetical excellence, Truth !

It is easy to *invent* in this way, when the inventor is bound by no rules ; nor is constrained to pay attention to any *likeness*. These are not *lusus Naturæ* ; but *lusus Artis* ; of which the pleasure ceases with the cessation of the Novelty ! — The same observations apply to language as to matter : for every one knows there are poets of language, as well as poets of matter. Improbable and unnatural ornaments are as objectionable, as improbable and unnatural matter. Yet each catch the depraved taste of the multitude ; and are practised by writers of minor genius, for the same reasons.

It is not surprising, that as long as Poetry resorts to these tricks, men of solid understanding reject it as a trifling Art. It thus deals in a factitious splendor ; a glare

of unchaste colours, which only raises the admiration of the weak and the uninformed! It is sickly and revolting to the sound and vigorous mind.

He, who has a just esteem of wisdom, who has a generous glow of heart, that feels grateful for pleasures, which are among the highest humanity can receive, cannot repress indignation at abuses which bring the noblest of Intellectual Arts into contempt!

Among those to whom the test of ages has assigned the place of great Poets, not a single instance can be produced, in whom the guiding endowment of a powerful understanding was not added to the active gifts of strong fancy and high invention! In their writings are to be found the deepest axioms of moral wisdom, the justest exhibitions of the human character, and the nicest and happiest displays of the emotions of the human heart! — Nothing is exaggerated; no combinations are formed, but such as are in unison with probability, and the laws of Nature, material or intellectual.

The variety of great gifts and acquirements, that is requisite to excellence in this high course of ambition, need not be insisted on. It is not wonderful therefore that the generality of candidates should resort to easier paths, by which they flatter themselves they shall mount the same ascent. It happens, that the Temple, which they behold at the top, is not the true one: but they flatter themselves that it is so; and if on their entrance they find there neither Homer, Virgil, Dante, Petrarch, Ariosto, Spenser, Tasso, Shakespeare, nor Milton, — instead of being taught their mistake by this deficiency, it only aggravates their self-delusion, and eclipses their former hope of equality by the mad supposition, that they are superior to these immortal men, and have gained an admission which has been refused to their predecessors!

It is both by *wrong rules*, and by the misconstruction and misapplication of *right rules*, that the aspirants justify their false efforts. They mistake not only the words, *fiction*, *invention*, and *originality*; but the objects of *imitation*.

It is said, that Truth cannot be the aim of poetry, because, for instance, in the representation of the scenery of Nature, or of the human form, the best poet would give either a selection from it, or an improvement of it. But here the mistake lies in the assumption of an improper object of imitation. It is not the *Poet's* business to give a picture of the material object : this is the business of the *Painter*. It is the purpose of poetry to represent the image which exists in the mind, which is formed of a compound from what is received by the *external* senses, and from what is supplied by the *internal* sensation and reflection. The picture thus formed is something very different from the external object. The mind adds, omits, selects; it enriches by sentiment; it elevates by intellectual associations. The laws of our Being are so uniform, that in minds of similar temperament, and similar cultivation, these intellectual processes operate for the most part in a similar manner, and produce similar impressions : the difference is only in the degree of their vividness.

But of what mental picture is the description of the *false* poet an imitation? If it be the imitation of any mental picture at all, it is of a picture produced by the capricious labours and forced artifices of one who strives to be singular, and to divest the movements of his intellect and his heart from their natural paths! His picture therefore wants the primary quality of poetry — *truth*.

We hear a great deal about the flowers of poetry. Flowers are very well in their place, and in their due proportion : but we must not have all flowers : there is a medium in every thing : *est modus in rebus* : they are sickly, when



they are combined with no fruit ; when we have nothing but flowers. To speak frankly , any affected display of them instantly destroys the charm ; and is inconsistent with that real inspiration , which engrosses the genuine poet too much to permit him to occupy his attention in seeking after superfluous ornament.

Of those , who have not taken erroneous roads , but have failed to rise above mediocrity for want of adequate powers , the instances , even among those who have had the good fortune to be enrolled as poets , are numerous. Of Johnson's Poets , more than one half are of this kind. Many are mere versifiers.

A versifier is one , who puts words into metre , when there is nothing poetical either in the matter , or the language : when there is no vigour of thought ; no happy image to give interest and novelty , to what is trite ; no mark of a mind fervid with the presence of the idea which it undertakes to convey. A cold and naked conclusion of the understanding , drawn without either fancy or sensibility , or in the absence both of fancy and sensibility , is certainly not poetry , however harmonious may be the metre in which it is expressed.

Of two minds equally formed by nature , discipline and habit will give the final powers and final productions of one a very different character from those of the other. If the various faculties , and gifts of fancy , invention , understanding , and sensibility , be originally equal , that will at last be predominant which is most cultivated. I attribute a great deal of the cast of such of Pope's productions , as are less poetical , to this cause. It would be too much to say , that Nature had endowed him with as sublime or copious an invention or fancy , as Milton or many others. But his occasional displays in those high departments leave no room



to doubt, that he might have conducted those faculties into an extraordinary and constant display of splendor.

BUT is it desirable, that all should cultivate the same faculties, and expend their efforts in the same way?

Pope had the option of different modes of turning the stores of opinions and sentiments which he had collected as a moral philosopher, to the purposes of his Art. He might embody them in an invented story, in which the conflicting characters might gradually unfold them in action; — or he might follow the manner of the prose philosopher, in delivering them as abstract axioms, in which the poetry would consist in the language, the illustrations, and the metre, aided by the vivacity, the vigour, the ingenuity, or the novelty of the thought. He chose the latter: probably as best suited to the powers, which he elected pre-eminently to cultivate. Had he chosen the first mode, and executed it equally well, it can scarcely be disputed that he would have been a still greater poet.

The consequence of the high excellence, to which he raised the department he cultivated, was to withdraw the taste of the Nation from all those more inventive, more wild, more visionary classes of poetry, in which Spenser and Milton, following the Italian school, had attained such splendor. Men, who could imitate Pope's Art, but who had none of his more noble endowments to give soul to it, took possession of the public mind, and domineered over it with the insolence of ill-got power.

At this time Collins and the two Wartons were reaching manhood. Their talents were cast in a different mould; and the father of the two last, who had been Poetry-Professor at Oxford, had imbued them with an early admiration of the rich and romantic imagery of Milton's juvenile poems. The original and dominant genius of Collins, independent of accidental bent, led him the same way.

## THE ANTI-CRITIC

They found that the public mind was closed to all merits of this sort; that what is called *good sense in verse* was the only excellence in which it could feel pleasure, or to which it could give praise. They conceived the chivalrous scheme of diverting the national taste into more varied and higher fields of intellectual excursion. They attributed to Pope the evil of having by his brilliant example produced this narrowness of taste. He therefore was chosen to be the subject of examination and dissection. When the tide is running strongly one way, it requires severe and extraordinary efforts to counteract it. It is possible, that Joseph Warton in his *Essay on Pope* went a little too far; but as his taste was exquisite; as he was a rich and varied scholar, and a benevolent and amiable man, he has made a Book, which will never cease to delight the cultivated mind. The power of that Book is proved by the influence it had on opinions not only become habitual by long prevalence, but naturally most congenial to the modes of thinking of the mass of mankind, engaged in the business of life, in its cares and necessities.

The Public opinion has since gradually taken an *opposite* turn; and at length gone much farther into the opposite *extreme*. To expose what was the species of excellence, which Pope neither attained, nor indeed sought, is no longer necessary or useful: still less is it necessary to draw harsh inferences as to his want of power in departments, in which perhaps there was only a want of will. Mr. Campbell and Lord Byron have done well in taking up the gauntlet for him. I feel a conviction, that the conclusion to which each of them has come on the subject is mainly right.

It is the nature of the general taste to be always passing backwards and forwards between extremes. It has no moderation; it deals in excesses and extravagances. Un-

bounded admiration is followed by equally unreasonable loathing; and in proportion as a name has once been lifted too high, it is afterwards sunk too low.

It would not be difficult to find in men of the most unrivaled genius some particular mental quality, in which they have been exceeded by many very inferior to them. It is the combination, the management, the proportion, the result of the whole, which confers the final superiority. It matters not by what processes they arrive at excellence. The excellence must be weighed as an whole; — not by the predominance of a particular ingredient. Probably there exists not a more perfect poem of its kind, than the *Eloisa to Abelard* : and let it be remembered that it is of a very high kind. It possesses every requisite of poetry in the highest degree. Here Pope certainly takes the character of an *Inventor*. Here is glowing imagery, pathos, sublimity, harmony, language elegant finished and perfect beyond example. Where would Pope stand, if he had written nothing else? Can inferior productions by the same author draw down this from its place?

Yet the love of wonder, of mystery, of exaggeration, of capricious invention, which has lately seized the public attention, makes even such animated and inspired productions appear tame and without interest to its factitious, unnatural, and depraved appetite. It cannot exist upon simple and sober food : it requires pungent irritations.

Is Truth exhausted? Are we necessitated to wander into the fields of the false Necromancer for entertainment and instruction? So far from it, that all, which has been done by all the best poetry of all the Nations of the world, has still left the greater portion of the subject's proper for this Art ungathered. But the fact is, that it is easier to form fantastic wreaths of artificial flowers, than to gather and work into perfect shape living ones. It costs less to con-

trast the colours, and give them a glare, which, however unchaste, is to common eyes more attractive.

Johnson has nobly said of Shakespeare, that he

*Exhausted worlds; and then imagined new.*

The former part of this praise does not belong to our modern poets; and if they have attempted the latter, it has been after a mode of their own. They have paid no regard to the principles of human nature, and the probabilities which the mind of man requires. It is admitted, that a desire is implanted in us, which is never content with the actual state of our Being. It loves to occupy itself in imagining an existence of more perfection; and poetry is never more happily or more properly employed than in describing these imaginations. But the principle on which they act is so uniform, that they pursue something like a congenial course in all cultivated intellects: and whatever is invented, not in conformity with these intellectual probabilities; whatever does not find an echo in the general bosom, neither affords instruction, nor conveys legitimate pleasure. Monstrous combinations, such as cannot effect the momentary delusion of belief in sound minds, are always revolting to the wise; and soon cease to excite the admiration of the corrupted and the foolish.

It is to genuine poetry that we must look for the valuable part of human knowledge, to which we can apply our faculties. If

*« The proper study of mankind is man : »*

then it is to the pages of poets that we must first resort; for in them are delineated with the most force all the finer movements of the Mind. If the Mind be so constituted, as the most eminent of modern Psychologists have argued it to be, who can understand the intellectual part of human

Nature so well as Poets? It is not cold Reason alone, which constitutes the power, that governs human conduct.

« Les moralistes de nos jours, » ( says *Bonstetten* in the Introduction to his *Etudes de l'Homme* ), ne nous disent-ils pas que l'empire sur nos passions est le plus noble des empires : mais cette conquête ne peut se faire que par la connoissance intime de nous-mêmes. Les lois aussi qui font la destinée des nations; et la grande charte de l'humanité, que tous les hommes réclament, c'est dans le sanctuaire de l'âme, c'est dans la connoissance de l'esprit humain, qu'il faut les chercher.

» Et cependant rien n'est plus négligé de nos jours que l'étude de l'homme ! La raison en est, que rien ne ressemble moins à l'homme que le portrait qu'en on fait les philosophes, qui, dans leurs idéologies, n'ont jamais dessiné qu'une partie de leur modèle. Voyez l'homme dans les livres de philosophie rationnelle, et comparez le à l'homme tel que nous le voyons. Quelle différence entre l'un et l'autre !

» A ne voir que nos idéologies, on dirait que la pensée ne se compose que d'idées. On a regardé le sentiment comme un hors-d'œuvre de l'esprit humain, tandis qu'il en fait partie intégrante. On ne lui a jamais assigné des lois constantes. On a cru expliquer par le raisonnement ce qu'on ne peut trouver que par les faits. A force de raisonner, on a oublié l'étude des faits, tandis qu'il ne falloit voir que les faits.

» *L'imagination* est la puissance motrice de l'esprit humain ; *l'intelligence* en est la puissance dirigeante. L'homme actif le produit de la combinaison des deux forces; la distinction des deux facultés est le résultat les plus important de la psychologie ».

If there be nothing of excellence in the external image, or in the internal emotion, or in the combination of the



two, or in the ingenuity and aptness of the observation; or in the force or elegance or propriety of the language, in which they are expressed, then the writer merits not to be numbered in the class to which he aspires; for

———— *mediocribus esse poetis*

*Non Dii, non homines concessere, etc.*

Still less deserving of distinction are those who are guilty of *commisive* faults; those who deal in *false* beauties.

But how happens it, that in so wide a field of contest, so few have attained excellence, so few been admitted to distinction; and of the few admitted, that so many do not deserve the admission? Of many, of whom a few compositions have been executed with felicity, how much the larger portion are sunk by defects! Of most of our poets, not only of the earlier ages, but of the seventeenth Century, among a few good lines, continually recur long passages ruined by poverty or coarseness of expression, by lameness in the collocation of the words, or the construction of the sentences, by the absurdity of the images, or the extravagance of the thoughts.

The obstacles must be great and numerous, that so often defeat success. To make a good poem requires an *union* of high qualities, so various, as seldom to be found. It is probable that the absence even of one may be fatal to the result.

But it seems to me, that the most common deficiency is in the sensibility; « *dans les profondeurs de l'âme; dans la sensibilité, la force motrice.* » All the talent, skill, and exertion in the world will not countervail this want. But memory, thought, knowledge, art, industry, are commonly called in, and produce abortions. When the soul is moved, the language in which it clothes itself, is always of a



congenial character : affectation and over-ornament are certain proofs that the emotion is pretended.

Some feel the true inspiration for a moment ; but the flame goes out ; and left in the dark , they fall into inequalities , errors , and abysses. Some write from memory alone ; and therefore , though their productions may be fair in outward form , they want interest and life.

For my part, I have no value for those writings, which have not the power

« To wake the soul by tender strokes of Art,  
To raise the genius , and to mend the heart : «

which merely exercise the reader's mind with the freaks of a wanton or a forced imagination ; which add nothing to the knowledge of the human character ; which develop no native passions ; which bear no resemblance to what exists, or is believed to exist. Novelty at the expence of Truth gives but a base and short-lived pleasure.

Imagination is not bestowed on us to erect phantoms, which mislead us from the contemplation of the magnificent and the beautiful, with which Nature has illumined our minds ; which may seduce us into a factitious love of the visions of Falsehood !

To give allurement to Vice, by representing it united with qualities with which it never can be united, is a perversion of the Author's genius, and the reader's attention.

To whom do we constantly turn in our moments of soberness , of melancholy , or delight ? In Gray we find that , which satisfies all our faculties and emotions ; and all that accords with the theory of poetry , which I have laid down. His matter is drawn not merely from external images , combined with internal emotion ; but the reflections of a mind , which has profoundly weighed the history of the

human character, are added to them. There is something of this in *Thomson's Seasons*; but much less of it; — and his diction wants the compressed vigour, and classical elegance of Gray: it is often diffuse and cumbrous; while not infrequently his sentiments and thoughts are trite and ostentatious. Shenstone's defect is tenuity and sameness; yet his *Elegy on Jessy* is a specimen of exquisite tenderness, purity, elegance, and harmony.

But Gray is a Poet of one of the first ranks: Thomson perhaps approaching to them. Of all the minor Poets, Parnell is among those, who deserve the highest praise. His *Hermit* is as fascinating, as it is instructive; which, without much force, or bold originality, partakes in due proportions of the essential ingredients of poetry. Of a still more vigorous and happy cast, though of less comprehensive morality, is *Prior's Henry and Emma*.

It is by embodying and bringing into action speculative views of human character, that the poet is performing his great task of *Creation*. Whatever stands insulated and abstracted from a series of actions, must depend upon the force and happiness of combination of image, emotion, thought, and language. In these last consists principally Lyrical, Descriptive, and Didactic poetry. As an Epic Poem is the highest species of invented Tale; so every Tale requires more invention than these last. But it is singular that the best of the second class of Poets have seldom aspired to this degree of invention: they have left it to their inferiors, who have relied more on the interest of the outlines of the Tale, than on the merits of the details with which these outlines were filled up. Perhaps they deemed it wiser to place their hope on the sterling ore of their materials, than on the claims of extended design: and that it was better to approach excellence in a minor

department, than to stop at mediocrity in that, which was superior.

It cannot be because the subjects of poetry are exhausted, but because poets shrink from traversing the true paths, that novelty is sought in false directions. They perceive the difficulties, and escape into regions of singularity and wonder, where artifice and surprise may cover their want of native and simple strength.

In looking back on the whole Body of English Poetry, how little is there, on a severe examination, which rises above mediocrity; or of which the faults do not outweigh the merits. The true tone is caught for a few moments; and then the author relapses into discord, or flatness, or absurdity. What a proof of the intensity of the powers which this Art demands! How many can mount the air; but how few can keep on the wing! It is the fire within, that fails; and memory and effort cannot supply its place. False thoughts; false metaphors; the cold chilling airs of technicality succeed; the charm is gone; and the exhausted poet falls to the ground.

A calm research into the innumerable volumes of the Candidates for Poetical fame will furnish inexhaustible evidence of these assertions. It is the inequality of most of the aspirants, which has sunk them into oblivion (1).

Such is the ill-nature of the world, that they remember

(1) This appears to be the true reason, why so many volumes of English poetry, of which the authors have given occasional specimens of real genius, have been laid aside and forgotten: while those of others, with meaner qualities, but more uniformity, have survived. I can no otherwise account for the oblivion of many of the Lyrical Poets of Charles I's reign: of Wither, Carew, Habington, Lovelace, Herrick, Stanley, L. Pembroke, Fanshaw, etc. Of each of these we can name one or two pieces, of which some are elegant and happy, and others exquisite!

the failures of an author, rather than his merits. Pope brought forth nothing, which was not highly laboured, and highly polished. All the management of an Artist appears, in addition to the power of Genius. It is perhaps by this management, this economy of the native fire, that the means of endurance are preserved.

Of that species of Poetry, which is preeminent in the display of the faculty of the Understanding, in which the talent of reasoning of an acute and vigorous judgement is exerted, Pope's *Essay on Criticism* is in every respect one of the most extraordinary. In all that is technical it is nearly perfect. In denseness of matter it comprises more, than ever was pressed into the same space. Its lucid arrangement is excellent. Its precepts are all just; and expressed with admirable perspicuity, elegance, and happiness of illustration. But they are not only just; many of them strike with a delightful novelty, from the felicitous force of the distinctions which they communicate. They are as comprehensive as they are minute; and display that candor, solidity, and temperate wisdom, which entitle them to the character of eternal truths. Is it possible to reflect without increasing astonishment, when we consider that this profound and perfect composition was produced at the age of twenty? It would be well for modern Critics to attend to the rules of this Essay!

« If Wit so much from ignorance undergo  
 Ah, let not learning too commence its foe!  
 Of old, those met rewards, who could excel,  
 And such were praised, who endeavour'd well;  
 Though triumphs were to generals only due,  
 Crowns were reserved to grace the soldiers too:  
 Now they who reach Parnassus' lofty crown,  
 Employ their pains to spurn some others down;

And while self-love each jealous writer rules,  
 Contending wits become the sport of fools :  
 But still the worst with most regret commend;  
 For each ill author is as bad a friend ».

But this age, which is so fond of bitter and relentless criticism, is as extravagant in its praises, as in its censures (1). Yet injudicious and excessive panegyric is surely rather hurtful than beneficial to its object. Mr. Campbell will scarcely thank his friend *Fabius* (2) for the following :

*« It is not generous in your Lordship, nor yet just, to sacrifice all your cotemporaries to the angry Manes of Pope. There is, at least, ONE LIVING POET, who is as far superior to Pope, both « in the thoughts that breathe, and words that burn, » as Pope is superior to Tickell. I accuse not your Lordship of envy; your pride of genius must spurn the approach of a passion so humiliating. Tell us then what part of Pope's writings would supply the divinity, that breathes and speaks in every part of Oconnor's Child? Will posterity indeed prefer the Eloise to GERTRUDE; — the Rape of the Lock to the Exile of Erin; and the Essay on Man to the PLEASURES OF HOPE? Pope was a poet; and he possessed an eminent and rare claim to the title: he knew how to touch, retouch, polish, alter, and improve every line, till it was highly finished. It is not the selection of the individual, Antinous, but the perfect execution, that has « gathered into existence the poetry of the bust ». In the present age, your Lordship knows, that there is only one poet, who finishes; — and his finishing, like his genius, is far superior to Pope's ».*

(1) The greater part of the Living Poets, who are in fashion, are I believe, themselves writers in the most popular Reviews'.

(2) Letter to Lord Byron, protesting against the immolation of Gray, Cowper, and Campbell, at the shrine of Pope.



The same Critic has the following monstrous remark :  
*« In the writings of Pope I look in vain for the genuine operation of feeling, — for the honest movements of the heart ; — for the real voice of nature, — for the true language of passion. All these appear in Pope like the image of the snow-clad trees in the icy lake. »*

It is a DISCOVERY, that there is no passion in the ELOISA TO ABELARD ; no movements of the heart in the ELEGY ON AN UNFORTUNATE LADY ; and in the DEDICATION of Parnell's Poems TO LORD OXFORD ! —

It is in vain, that this Critic attempts to dispute Lord Byron's position, that *« the highest of all poetry is ethical poetry, as the highest of all earthly objects must be moral truth »* (1). This position stands on a rock : perhaps Lord B.'s illustrations of it require to be a little more guarded and qualified. Mere moral truth does not constitute poetry : it must be moral truth conveyed in a poetical manner. Half the errors in modern judgements on this subject arise from the narrow notion, that good poetry must principally consist of imagery.

Campbell in his « Essay on English Poetry », (1) says very happily : *« Why try Pope, or any other poet, exclusively by his powers of describing inanimate phenomena ? Nature, in the wide and proper sense of the word, means life in all its circumstances, — nature moral, as well as external ». — « Pope's discrimination lay in the lights and shades of human manners, which are at least as interesting as those of rocks and leaves »* (2). *In moral eloquence he is for ever densus and instans sibi ».*

It is true, that Man in society does not indulge those sublime musings, which, if his mind be full of energy and

(1) In his *Letter in answer to Bowles's Strictures on Pope*.

(2) *Specimens of Brit. Poets*, 1. 24.



passion, he cherishes in solitude. The poet is confined to the study of a Being harder, coarser, and less intellectual. What belongs to the happiness of the Many, may be more *useful* than what belongs to the happiness of the Few : but we must not estimate the dignity of every thing merely by its common use !

We must appreciate a poetical subject, not by its material or immaterial quality ; but ( whichever of these it be ), according to the degree of its sublimity, its pathos, or its beauty. There is beauty in propriety, elegance, and harmony of language joined to justness of thought : and when to the latter is added extraordinary vigour, it often rises to sublimity. In such consist the merit of no small proportion of the matter both of Dante, and of Milton.

Yet it is clear that Joseph Warton in theory, and Darwin both in theory and in practice, entertained the principle of the *materialism* of poetry.

Johnson has remarked (1), that there are « modifications of life, and peculiarities of practice, which are the progeny of error and perverseness ; or at best of some accidental influence, or transient persuasion », and, « which must perish with their parents ». Something of this kind distinguishes every successive age of poetry from its predecessor. We have the Provençal style ; and long Moral Allegory ; the Epic Romance ; the Historic Legend ; the Elisabethan pastoral ; the Metaphysical ; the Court Lyric both of Italian and of the French School ; the Satirist of life and manners ; the Descriptive and Didactive ; the Lyric of Abstract Personifications ; the Epistolary ; the Mock-heroic of domestic life ; the Della Crusca tinsel ; the Botanic fiction ; the Gentle ; the Simple ; the Festive ; the Mysterious ; the Terrible ; the Anatomical.

In most of these the fault arises from exclusiveness ;

1] In his Life of Butler.

from carrying a particular manner, to excess. All original authors, like original painters, will be in some degree *mannerists*; but to rest the merit on the particularity, is a fatal error!

What is false, catches the multitude so much quicker than what is true; and the merit of what is technical is so much more easily apprehended by common critics, as well as by common readers, than the merit of native genius, that these peculiarities have at all times been among the sources of temporary fame. But Time has dispensed its judgements with an impartiality and propriety seldom mistaken.

It is observable, that all those, who are placed by the test of posterity at the head of the list of English Poets, were men of great *general* powers of mind: such as Chaucer, Spenser; Milton, Cowley, Dryden, Pope, Butler, Prior, and Gray. These were all men not only of powerful fancies, and great erudition; but of acute and vigorous understandings. The prevalence of a particular faculty, uncontrouled or unenriched by others, never put a poet in the first, or even the second rank. We may best illustrate this by instances of those, in whom the single faculty was most eminent. *Thomson* had a most vivid fancy; but he gives little proof of a very powerful understanding; or of an heart of deep passion; or even of invention, unless the *Castle of Indolence* may support his claim to it. *Young* had an acute intellect, sagacious in the observation of manners; flowing with sentiment; and enriched by imagery; but he wanted judgement: his pictures are all exaggerated, and over-wrought. There is in *Akenside* more of rhetorical flourish, than of genuine inspiration. *Shenstone* wants strength and comprehension of thought. *Lyttelton* is elegant and classical; but he is deficient in originality, imagination, and fire. *Dyer* has had the singular good

fortune of placing himself justly among genuine poets by the production of one only lyrical piece, written apparently with great carelessness and ease; and certainly wanting in the «*limæ labor*:» I mean the delightful poem of *Grongar Hill*. His other compositions are unconquerably dull.

No one now reads *Gilbert West*, though praised by Gray, (who was almost always niggardly in his encomiums), with a warmth that seems quite unaccountable. His *Translation of Pindar* entitles him to the fame of a scholar; of a man of great talents; and great as well as elegant, attainments. No one probably ever did read *David Mallet*.

Let it be observed, that Chaucer, Spenser, Milton, Cowley, and Prior, were all Statesmen; and that the opinions of Dryden, Pope, Butler, and Gray, were all exercised on Public Affairs.

If we turn our eyes on *Shakespeare*, perhaps the greatest poetical genius, who ever lived, we shall find in his pages more moral axioms, more of that which is applicable to every-day life, than in those of all other poets united.

Let us not then estimate poetry by its improbabilities; its exaggerations; and its deviations from reason! Let us reject the false principles of Criticism, on which it has been assumed, that Pope was no poet; and let us not so lavishly grant this honour to those, whose errors are set up as their claim to it!

### III.

BARNABEE'S JOURNAL BY RICHARD BRATHWAIT.

*Edited by Joseph Haslewood, Esq.*

Among the minutiae of Literary History, the appropriation of that admirable and justly popular poem of

*Barnabee's Journal* (or *Drunken Barnabee*), to its true author, RICHARD BRATHWAIT, is one of the most singular; and does the highest credit to the critical sagacity, as well as to the unsparing industry and intelligence, of the fortunate discoverer, Mr. Haslewood, the last Editor of this droll and exquisite piece of pleasantry. (See *Gent. Mag.* vol. LXXXVIII. i. 39. XCI. i. 440). —

RICHARD BRATHWAIT was 2.d son of Thomas Brathwait of Burneshead, in the parish of Appleby, Co. Westmoreland, Esq. who died 1610, by Dorothy, daughter of Robert Bindloss of Haulston, in the same County; and is supposed to have been born at Burnshead, 1588. In 1604, he became a Commoner of Oriel College Oxford, at the age of 16 : whence he went to one of the Inns of Court to study the law; a science, which he neglected for poetry, and the Belles Lettres. Hence he retired into the country; having been left by his father a provision in landed property. In 1617, at the age of 29, he married a lady of a good family, who died 1633, and by whom he had nine children. In the country he became, according to A. Wood « Captain of a Foot - Company in the Trained Bands; a Deputy-Lieutenant in the County of Westmoreland; a Justice of Peace; and a noted wit and poet ».

At the end of six years, from the death of his first wife, he remarried Mary, daughter of Roger Crofts, of Kirtlington, Co. York, Gent. (of Scottish origin), who owned the valuable Manor of Catterick in that County. By her he had issue the gallant sir Strafford Brathwait.

To this Manor of Catterick our poet removed in the latter part of his life, and dying there 10 May 1673, at the age of 85, was buried in the church of that parish. His wife survived him, till April 1681.

Before he left his Inn of Court, he had already acquired the distinction of « one of the wits » of his day. Mr.

Haslewood gives an enumeration of more than 42 publications of his : the last in 1665 : — the first, the *Golden Fleece*, in 1611.

To most of these publications the author's name was affixed ; and he was among the popular writers of his day : but these pieces became afterwards neglected ; and Wood with a sort of random and indiscriminate bitterness that he often indulged in the form of the same sterile expressions, which his dulness prevented him from varying, says, that in his time they were « slighted and despised as frivolous matter, and only to be taken into the hands of novices ».

Neglect was followed by scarcity ; and all, except the *Gentleman*, and *Gentlewoman*, became unknown to Booksellers' catalogues : and many of them for the first time were developed even to the most curious Bibliographers by the researches of the present Editor.

In this state stood the literary character of Brathwait, till within these ten years. The fashion of reviving the acquaintance with authors of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, once known but sunk by time into oblivion, drew a little notice to one or two of the Tracts of this writer. But from these it scarcely appeared that he rose above the quaintness and factitious ingenuity, which formed the temporary fashion of his age. There are always swarms of authors who have a secondary sort of talents, which can catch and exaggerate the prevailing mode, whatever it may be : but who, when that mode goes out, lose all attraction.

A new Edition of *Barnabee's Journal* was now called for : and the superintendence of Mr. Haslewood was asked, and granted. Late Editors had ascribed the work to an ideal person, one *Barnabee Harrington*, on the authority of a misconstrued passage. Mr. Haslewood was sure, that

this was a baseless assumption; but he had yet no discovery of his own, with which to supply its place.

The Preface to the new Edition was already sent to the Printer, when Mr. H. seeing occasion to refer to Brathwait's *Strappado for the Divell*, 1615, for the purpose of illustrating an obscure passage, was struck with a similarity in the *Apology for the Errata* to those which occurred in *Barnabee's Journal*. A right clue once obtained runs and expands before the eye of energetic research, like wild-fire.

Tract after Tract of Brathwait's scarce Pieces was examined; and still the same quaint and peculiar apology for the Errata was found in each.

Another clue now suggested itself. In the *Journal* is this passage; (in Part III. p. 309).

« Veni Darlington, prope vicum  
Conjugem duxi peramicam : »  
« Thence to Darlington; there I boused;  
Till at last I was espoused. »

AGAIN :

« Veni Nesham, Dei donum,  
In Cænobiarchæ domum;  
Uberem vallem, salubrem venam,  
Cursu fluminis amænam,  
Lætam sylvis, et frondosam,  
*Heræ vultu speciosam.* »  
« Thence to Nesham, now translated,  
Once a nunnery dedicated;  
Vallies smiling, bottoms pleasing,  
Streaming rivers never ceasing,  
Deckt with tufty woods and shady,  
Graced by a lovely Lady. »



AGAIN :

« Nunc ad Richmund, primo flore ,

Nunc ad *Nesham*, cum uxore ,

Læto cursu properamus ,

Et amamur et amamus ;

Pollent floribus ambulachra ,

Vera veris simulachra ».

« Now to Richmund, whence spring's coming ,

Now to *Nesham* with my woman ,

With free course we both approve it ,

Where we love , and are beloved ;

Here fields flower with freshest creatures

Representing Flora's features ».

Mr. H. therefore procured a search to be made in Darlington and its neighbourhood for the marriage of Brathwait. In the parish Register of *Hurworth* , in which parish NESHAM is situated, a village about three miles from *Darlington* , was found the decisive evidence : *the marriage of Richard Brathwait with Frances daughter of James Lawson of Nesham Esq. on May 1617.* —

The identity of the author was no longer to be doubted. But the more the Editor examined , the more coincidences he found with peculiar passages in the acknowledged writings of Brathwait.

The Edition containing this discovery appeared in 1818. D.<sup>r</sup> Bliss has since communicated the following confirmation from the MSS of T. Hearne.

« The Book called *Barnabas' Rambles* , printed in Latin and English, in-12.<sup>o</sup> , was written by *Richard Brathwaite* , who writ and translated a vast number of things besides ; he being a scribler of the times. But Mr. Bagford tells me that Mr. Chr. Bateman , ( an eminent Bookseller in Pater-

noster Row), who was well-acquainted with some of the family, hath several times told him that Brathwait was the author of it. *This Book is since printed (1) ».*

In farther confirmation Mr. Haslewood has discovered, that in a copy of the 2.d *Edit.* which belonged to Edw. Wilson Esq. of Dallam Tower, Co. Westmoreland, was written the following note :

« *The author I knew*, was an old poet, Rich. Brathwait, father of sir Thomas, of Burnside Hall, near Kendall in Westmorland (2) ».

Mr. Haslewood by the aid of a variety of coincidences fixes the date of the *first* Edition of *Barnabee's Journal* to 1650; and by an ingenuity of circumstantial evidence discovers the Printer to have been *John Haviland*.

Sixty six years then elapsed before a second Edition appeared. It had been published anonymously; and in this period the name of the author, which had probably long floated on the public breath, had been lost to the literary world.

« In progressu Boreali,  
Ut processi ab Australi,  
Veni *Banbery*, o prophanum!  
Ubi vidi Puritanum  
Felem facientem furem,  
Quia Sabbatho stravit murem ».  
« In my progresse traveling Northward,  
Taking my farewell oth' southward,  
To *Banbery* came I, O prophane one!  
Where I saw a Puritan one,

(1) The date of this MS of Hearne is 1713. The words in *Italics* were afterwards added, and clearly allude to the reprint of 1716.

(2) Probably son of Edw. Wilson, by Iane daughter of *Gawen Brathwait* of Ambleside Esq. See Burn's Hist. of Westm. i. 227.

Hanging of his Cat on Monday,  
For killing of a Mouse on Sondag ».

But why the author's name should not have come forth at the Restoration; why a composition of so much vivacity, such pure and unfailing humour, such elegant scholarship, so happily colloquial, so adapted to universal popularity, so fitted at once for the polite, the educated, and the common reader, should not, at a period so congenial to its political and moral opinions, come into full notice and reputation, remains to be solved!

That the Public had a taste for colloquial poetry and witty exposure of political character, is proved by the reception given to *Hudibras*, of which the Three First Cantos appeared in 1663. It is not meant to compare *Barnabee's Journal* with this extraordinary production; for there is an essential difference in their features, materials, and manner. *Barnabee's* distinction is simple, easy humour: *Hudibras* is almost over-abundant with original and profound wit; with deep knowledge of the perversities of human nature; with exhaustless allusions to abstruse learning; with sagacious observations on the conduct of man in society; with axioms, which are become proverbial; with images, of which the felicitous and unexpected similitude never loses its brilliance.

Brathwait not only survived the Restoration thirteen years; but still continued to write and to publish. But he was, at this epoch, arrived at the age of 73; and perhaps he thought that the *Journal* betrayed too much levity for years so far advanced: it is true that at the period of publication this objection was in some degree in force; but the two first Parts at least seem to have been written in early youth; and perhaps the poet then trusted to the concealment of his name.

On the whole, I am inclined to attribute the neglect and oblivion, into which this poem soon fell, to that very Restoration, by which it ought to have been drawn into full life. All the literature of the preceding twenty years was then indiscriminately forced into one common grave : the dead and the living were buried together. The violent change, which took place, made it the fashion to reject every thing, that had before prevailed. All, which could interest, must be now not only gay; but French gaiety. Perhaps the Latin, ( however light and happy ), of *Barnabee*, was enough to make him be considered pedantic.

In the same manner we must account for the simultaneous rejection of Lovelace, Stanley, Carew, Lord Pembroke, Herrick, and many others; whose poems now ceased to be read, and were soon forgotten.

But it is also very probable, that the author of *Barnabee's Journal* did not himself sufficiently estimate the value of his own composition. — I infer this from the character that more or less pervades all the other writings of Brathwait, with which I have had an opportunity of obtaining any acquaintance. In all of them is quaintness, pedantry, and a strong mixture of bad taste. They are the productions of a secondary kind of genius, stimulated into being by the hot-bed of temporary fashion : a sort of intermediary of an accomplished and literary man of the world between the learned, and the mass of idle and busy society. Hence A. Wood's censure, that they were the delight of a former age; the cast-offs of the better informed of that, which succeeded. Johnson says admirably, « Those modifications of life and peculiarities of practice, which are the progeny of error and perverseness, or at best of some accidental influence, or transient persuasion, must perish with their parents (1) ».

(1) Poets. — Life of Butler.


Perhaps *Barnabee's Journal* cost the author least pains; and he therefore thought it his worst performance. Criticism, and the artificial rules of composition, are the things which often turn genius out of its path. A critic loves technical rules, because it requires neither taste, nor talent, to comprehend and apply them. He thinks things excellent just in proportion as they are artificial; viz. as they want genius!

What arises from the uninterrupted flow of a happy vein, they have not the tact to appreciate. The natural association of images; the sentiments which are their unsought companions; the simple diction, which does not overdress the thought, — these are the marks of that intrinsic power, that golden ore, which never loses its value. — And these belong to *Barnabee's Journal*!

Yet *Barnabee's Journal*, tho' the work of a voluminous and well-practised author, lay forgotten for 56 out of the first 66 years of its existence; and has been only partially revived, till within the last 16 years; while the hand, that wrote it, has been only discovered within these three years! —

Still we are insultingly told, that nothing is forgotten, which deserves to be remembered: that the public taste is supreme: that it neglects not, thro' whim, or prejudice, or dullness; that it praises not without adequate cause! —

If others do not go quite so far; if they admit that the *generous* Public sometimes praises without reason, they insist that it never condemns to unmerited oblivion!



## IV.

## PETRARCH'S INDUSTRY.

IN Petrarch's Sonnets, *taken together*, is a course of high sentiment, and passion, *embodied*! — The enthusiasm of his love: the visionary circumstances, that it associates with all the incidents belonging to it; — the ideal charms annexed to Laura's person; her movements; her feelings, — all partake of the nature of Creation, or Invention. —

PETRARCH's love of solitude; and love of the spiritual World, mutually inflamed each other! —

He knew that his splendid faculties ought not to be wasted on common-place affairs, which others could discharge as well as himself. —

The greatest faculties must not expect to have all their strength at command without industry and discipline. — Leisure, silence, calmness, unbroken attention, are requisite. — Exercise operates surprisingly in the attainment of facility: ideas gradually develop themselves with clearness, that at first seemed involved in the darkest incomprehensibility. —

« *Magnas partes* », ( says our poet ) « *rure ago, nunc etiam, ut semper, solitudinis appetens, et quietis. Lego, scribo, cogito; hæc vita, hæc delectatio mea est, quæ mihi semper ab adolescentiâ meâ fuit. Mirum, tam jugi studio, tam pauca tanto in tempore didicisse* ».

If Petrarch, the most eloquent, fertile, and copious,



writer of his laborious and wonderful age could say this, what can a puny modern say?

---

## V.

## MILTON'S SELF CONFIDENCE.



No one ever executed a great work of intellect, without high self-confidence.

But who can have this confidence, if his opinion is to depend on the capricious judgements of others? Not only erroneous taste, but envy and jealousy, may cloud the judgements, that we suppose most free from them.

Johnson says of MILTON, that « it appears in all his writings, that he had the usual concomitant of great abilities, a lofty and steady confidence in himself; perhaps not without some contempt of others ». But who can be compared with Milton?

The confidence will « come, and go », in weaker minds : it will be a succession of provoking hopes evaporating in melancholy diffidences : active life will have been surrendered; but the substitute not enjoyed. It will not be as it was with the noble poet just mentioned.

« I trust hereby », says he, « to make it manifest, with what small willingness I endure to interrupt the pursuit of no less hopes, than these; and leave a calm and pleasing solitariness, fed with chearful and confident thoughts, to embark in a troubled sea of noise and hoarse disputes, put from beholding the bright countenance of Truth, in the quiet and still air of delightful studies ».

## VI.

YOUNG'S UNIVERSAL PASSION:

---

YOUNG has endeavoured to prove, that *Love of Fame* is the *Universal Passion* : and to elucidate it by a satirical poem, full of point and wit. The only difference is in the mode taken to obtain this : and this is as diversified, as human character, and human action.

Mankind, however, seem to have agreed, that the ambition of intellectual excellence is among the most laudable of human impulses.

But the road to Excellence is not always the road to Fame.

---

## VII.

GRAY'S PURSUITS, AND HABITS.

---

Is it to be lamented, that Gray wrote so little? Did he make the due use of the talents conferred on him by Providence? Is it not true, that

« When in the breast the imperfect joys expire »,

when they are not embodied in language, and communicated, they are not only useless to others, but unsatisfactory to him, whom they have visited?

What was the faculty, that Gray principally employed in reading? If he only employed memory, he neglected the higher faculties, which he possessed! It is not sufficient to comprehend, and remember what others have written: it ought to be enriched by the reader's own reflections. The power of original thought improves wonderfully by practice: but he, who is accustomed to go in leading-strings, can seldom venture alone.

It cannot be questioned that Gray could think for himself; and did think for himself on all great occasions. He thought not only powerfully, but rightly. His fault was fastidiousness. He was too little disposed to be pleased; and he exacted too rigid correctness.

---

Who are of consequence? Who have made themselves worthy of general notice, and general esteem? Who have done that, which has not been equally done, or cannot be equally done, by a thousand others? Could many others have written the *Elegy*; the *Ode on Eton College*; etc. of Gray? What is most excellent seems easy to be done: but the trial proves the contrary.

There must be something of uncommon felicity in that to which we perpetually recur, after other things have lost all interest with the loss of novelty! Is it the polish, and terseness of expression; the happy selection of images; or the simplicity, truth, and pathos of the sentiments?

---

Gray, personally received but little of the incense of attention and praise, which the fame of his writings drew upon them. He mingled scarcely at all in that sort of society, who were fitted or disposed to estimate duly his genius.

Johnson lived in the full tide popularity : courted ; listened to ; flattered ; worshipped.

---

Gray ( I beleive ) says « a dead Lord only ranks with a Commoner ». — After death, the prejudices in his favour, which accompany him in life, are extinguished. He is examined with the same impartiality, as any plebeian.

---

In what consisted the difference between Gray, and Lyttelton ?

Lyttelton had numerous advantages over Gray in the opportunity of seeing mankind ; in converse with the business of life ; and in that impulse and that skill, which are generated by collision of intellects ! — But all these could not counteract the superiority of natural gift.

In the internal construction of Gray's mind was vigor and fire.

In that of Lyttelton, gentleness and facility, but feebleness. He had no invention : he was therefore not deficient in plain sense, because he was not exposed to be led astray by *ignes fatui*. But then in wanting force, he wanted that piercing sagacity, which gives to common sense its greatest use.

Gray, in the unstimulating and drowsy ease of a College life, suffered the higher powers of his mind to slumber, and rust, while he was content to amuse himself by employing his prodigious memory. Whoever reads his Letters, will be convinced that this is not too severe a censure.

His serious Letters ( for his trifling ones sadly betray the affectations of a *petit-maitre* ), give great interest, from the depth and accuracy of the knowlege, with which they are tinctured ; and the delightful skill of deep and perfect

scholarship, under the influence of pure, acute, and lofty taste. —

But in the profusion of these treasures, we regret those still more valuable riches, which he seems too lazy to bring forth! We have few of the results of his own original powers of thinking! — He recalls to us the facts of history; the opinions of moralists; the sentiments and images of poets; the explanations of scholars; etc. but he seldom gives us his own thoughts, and theories. It is the evil, into which an unproportionate cultivation of memory leads the most powerful minds.

But Gray could think powerfully; imagine powerfully; and invent powerfully! — His BARD is a proof of his rich and sublime Invention!

At the epoch at which Gray wrote, the powers of *Invention* seem almost to have ceased in English poetry: unless a few personifications and allegorical abstractions, may be called *Invention*; which Jos. Warton, when he wrote the Preface to his Early Poems, seems to have thought.

I am not sure, that we have made much improvement by the extravagant Inventions of modern days.

And what Invention is there in the major part of the poets in Johnson's Collection? Has Denham Invention? Has Waller Invention? Perhaps a simile; or a metaphor will be called Invention! — There is more Invention in Butler: but he wants dignity of subject. Blackmore, Swift, Addison, Gay, Phillips, Savage, Somerville, Tickel, Hammond, Dyer, Mallet, Watts, etc., want Invention. — Even Shenstone cannot be said to have shewn Invention, unless in his *Elegy of Jesse*, « Why mourns my friend ».

I would give Dryden credit for Invention from the manner in which he has expanded the *Tales of Boccaccio*; and Prior, for his expansion of the *Nut-Brown Maid*! — So Pope, for his *Eloisa to Abelard*; and his *Rape of the Lock*! —

Collins is every where Inventive! — Above all, in his Ode to the Passions! I can discover nothing, on which I can found Akenside's claim to Invention.

Beattie's *Minstrel* entitles him to this distinction. But where shall we find it for Cowper? Many of the Songs of Burns will entitle him to this praise.

Mighty then, but prostituted name of *Poet*, to how few dost thou properly belong?

Was a man with the genius, erudition, and habits of GRAY happy? His life was probably a mixture of extreme enjoyment, and bitter suffering. His hours of energy passed in pure and noble occupations; lifted above worldly cares; unpressed by worldly biasses: but man is yet a dependant being. His instinctive affections told him so: he exclaimed;

« Poor Moralist! and what art Thou?

A solitary fly!

No hive hast thou of hoarded sweets! »

His ardors must often have stagnated within him, for want of objects: cold fogs must have congregated over his heart: and have

Frozen « the genial current of his soul ».

The first quality of a poet is universally allowed to be *Invention*: the power of imagining new combinations of incidents or scenery; and associating them with a lively description of the sentiments that would naturally be excited in such situations. Of the productions exhibiting an equal quantity of invention, those are the best, of which the ingredients are the most magnificent, or the most pathetic.



On this principle, Milton stands at the head of our poets — (separate from the Dramatic); — and Spenser next to him. Perhaps Chaucer stands third, in right of his Canterbury Tales.

If invention be the character of a poet, how do those shew the characters, who are mere portrait-painters?

By selection of circumstances; by picturesqueness of language; by vividness of colouring. There is even in this a minor sort of novelty of combination.

---

## VIII.

### P O E T R Y.

*Subjects of Poetry compared to distant Views.*

---

« A step, methinks, may pass the stream;  
So little distant dangers seem.  
So we mistake the future's face,  
Eyed through Hope's delusive glass!  
As yon summits soft and fair,  
Clad in colours of the air,  
Which, to those who journey near,  
Barren, and brown, and rough appear;  
Still we tread the same coarse way;  
The present's still a cloudy day ».

*Dyer's Grongar Hill.*

It is the same with subjects of poetry : Matters of Fiction

are better described than matters of reality : because they are seen at a distance ; and without the barrenness and roughness , which are mixed up in actual life. He therefore who takes upon himself to describe his own circumstances and feelings , undertakes a task less congenial with the nature of poetry.

---

## IX.

## C O W P E R.



The character of Cowper given by Campbell is very elegantly and discriminatively written. It observes accurately upon his want of invention : and upon the charm arising from portraiture ; viz. a delineation of self, when that self is full of simplicity and interest : of pure and virtuous sentiment ; of moral rectitude ; of energetic indignation of vice.

But still compositions can scarcely be deemed to possess the higher qualities of poetry , without INVENTION. The power and gratification of imagining things more beautiful than reality is a quality implanted in our nature : and it is to satisfy this propensity, that the grand faculties of poetry are called forth.

What is called the poetry of REASON may be very beautiful ; but still it is not the highest kind of poetry.

The ornaments of poetry may be applied to moral lessons, and practical sentiments : and they may illustrate and heighten the force and beauty of those lessons and sentiments : but there the poetry is subordinate to the matter ; not the matter to the poetry.

By this test Cowper is inferior to Thomson, who, with not less exactness, has more invention in his descriptions than the other : and who has proved by his *Castle of Indolence*, that he possessed an high degree of that faculty.

The visionary talents of Collins rank him among poets of the true spirit. He saw ideal persons ; and endowed them with ideal souls. He gazed upon those undefined glimmerings of imaginary Beings, which, like the glorious rays of the sunbeam, when it first comes in spring to make the heart glad, play involuntarily before the richly-stored, and highly-excited mind. When he addresses *Fear*, he is worked up as if that powerful Passion was actually personified before him.

Burns also is in this respect superior to Cowper. Many of his poems, and songs, are upon imaginary subjects.

Tom Warton scarcely shews it, except in his *Crusade*. Notwithstanding it has been denied, his *Suicide* was probably suggested by the fate of Chatterton.

Gray had invention : but he did not greatly exert it, except in his *Bard*.

There are poets, who call up clusters of associations by a judicious selection of leading circumstances just hinted. This gives reason to infer that their own minds revel in accompanying creations : but they seem to shrink from the hazardous task of bringing them before the reader in the form of language. We give them credit therefore rather for what we think they might have done, than for what they have done.

---

## X.

## CENSURES OF POPE.



What are the objections, made by censurers to the moral character of Pope?

That he was bitter and envious :

That he was fond of money :

That he was deceitful :

That he had a mean admiration of the great ; though he affected to despre them :

That he was vain of his wealth :

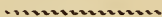
That he was full of little artifices :

That he was a secret plagiarist.

That he was fond of indecences, and his attachment to Martha Blount impure, etc. etc.

All, or most, of these, seem to be charges made with a total absence of candour.

His satirical temper, and his indulgence of a deeply vindictive spirit for petty injuries to his fame, appears to be the least defensible of his moral defects. It had been more noble to treat his assailants with an indignant contempt. He crushed them, and made them miserable with too unsparing an hand.



## XI.

## TRUE PRINCIPLES OF POETRY.



We have two kinds of existence, or consciousness — Material — and Intellectual : — It is with the latter, that poetry is principally conversant. —

Each is in truth in some degree mixed with the other : but as the one, or the other predominates, or originates, it takes the character of the predominator, or originator.

For instance when outward objects are impressing themselves on the material frame, they operate on the sensorium, which thus stirs and associates the new impression to ideas already there.

And when the primary movement commences internally, it either recalls the images of what is material received at some former time from without, or admits the accession of their operation at the present moment from actual presence.

The whole conduct of the mind arising out of *Material Consciousness* appears to be different from that arising out of *Intellectual Consciousness* ! — While the outward objects are actually present, they of course make their impression according to their *real* and *exact* forms. They will not allow the imagination to select, nor to add. They therefore incumber his taste ; or confine his invention.

But when these things are recalled thro' the fancy in absence ; when the movement originates with the mind, then the mind is the Master : it selects, or it adds, as it chooses.

The poet therefore, who attempts to describe objects from their actual presence, is sure to fail. There is an hardness, a confusion, a tiresome exactness about him, which destroys the charm of poetry.

In truth the attempt is a strong presumption that the attempter feels not the genuine poetical talent. Sometimes it may happen that one really qualified may be misled by bad advice, bad example, or wrong system : but not often !

Perhaps it is the most distinctive mark of genius, that the *movement* ORIGINATES from within !

This is a reason, why genius rejects all prescribed subjects; or executes them badly.

The presence of an object upon the senses may be supposed to be a substitute for fancy : but it is not ! —

There is a vast difference in the degree of strength and clearness, with which objects operate at the moment on different *brains*. Perhaps the memory of such objects may be in proportion to that strength and clearness : but it does not follow that the fancy is necessarily attached to it : that is, the power of recalling the image itself with as much vividness as if present ! —

It is the vividness of emotion, caused by the presence of fancy, which is a peculiar and inseparable mark of genius. The skill of cold, labouring, Art can never be a substitute for it.

But does not the presence of the objects themselves create the same emotion ? And why is this emotion not communicable thence, as well as from the power of the Fancy ?

Perhaps the fire of an *Intellectual* image is more communicable to an Intellectual process, ( which literary composition must be admitted to be ), than the fire of a material image !

The mind moves by its own impulses. There is a spirit within, that often sets it at work. It then makes use of



such of its stores as the occasion demands : and among them are images originally derived from material objects : but the presence of the material objects themselves has no concern with these movements.

It is disgusting to reflect how far-fetched and mistaken criticism has led poets astray from the real objects of the Art ! All the little technicalities, which were intended as adjuncts, have been deemed principals !

---

It is scarcely possible to describe, or delineate, all the degrees of Invention, of which the human mind is capable, or to which it is accustomed in its poetical occupations.

A highly fertile and grand genius imagines or invents new orders of Beings, and new worlds for their habitation. He creates them with grandeur, or beauty : and he suits himself to the range and colour of belief, to which mankind are disposed. This is a task only undertaken by the very highest order of genius.

Another, taking humanity itself as the material of his production, and the existing earth as its scene, elevates it by new combinations ; improves it by happy selection ; interests by grandeur, or pathos of sentiment ; surprises by force of illustration, or delights by loftiness, force, harmony, and elegance of language. This is the result of a mind of splendid endowments always exercising itself in the cultivation and disposition of the requisite materials.

But there are numerous degrees of excellence far below these.

When there is not strength or perseverance to invent an whole story, detached portions, or single figures may be invented. Or the invention may be confined merely to the illustration ; to the simile, figure, or metaphor : or

even to the polish of the diction, or the harmony of the verse.

Some minds employ themselves in seeking imagery; and some in sentiment; and some in elucidating the deductions of reason.

If nature has been bountiful to them in the talents requisite for the pursuit to which they addict themselves, they strike out by long toil useful and sometimes brilliant truths, or at least amusing pictures and instructive elucidations.

It must be on some of these minor results, that the majority of the lesser poets must build their claims to the laurel.

---

This comprehensive view may perhaps let in even the Metaphysical poets. For these writers, always ingenious, though often absurd, and generally tasteless, frequently illustrated a moral truth, or a chain of reasonings by similes, or figures, which, however far-fetched, were striking, and abundant in reflection.

It could only have been in the intellectual part of their consciousness that these fruits were produced. They must have cultivated a constant habit of turning inward; and keeping their mental faculties in great activity.

Sometimes it was not accuracy, or the unexpected likeness of the illustration, that pleased: but something in which the extravagance of the comparison may be forgiven for the gallantry of the compliment: but more especially for the beauty of the imagery; the sweetness of the expression; and the music of the verse. Such as in *Carew's Song*:

« Ask me no more, where Jove bestows,  
When June is gone, the fading rose ».

These are , however , rather the misapplications than the proper employments of poetical minds. In these devious courses some unexpected beauties will occasionally burst upon us ; and some unlooked-for fruit occasionally be furnished : but much labour has , notwithstanding , been lost.

---

In different periods of society, the human mind employs itself in search of different fruits. Man is imitative; and few have the boldness to chalk out a road of their own.

In one age an image is deemed sufficient to fill the mind by its own simple grandeur : in another, fashion places the interest in the decoration of it : or in its use to adorn , or explain , something abstract , or in most respects dissimilar; and discovered in some one point to be unexpectedly like.

---

In proportion as the ideas in which the composition deals, are complex , is the force of any particular quality of genius less apparent , and less requisite. —

The Metaphysical poets therefore , and those quaint writers , who formed the class that immediately succeeded them , were generally men of considerable talents and acquirements, but of minor genius.

---

The understanding is generally employed in studying and teaching the nature and due regulations of our material existence; or consciousness.

It is the business of poetry to represent our Intellectual existence, or Consciousness. If therefore it occupies itself principally in instructing us in the former , it descends from its due sphere.

If we wish to represent things in the order and with the accompaniments in which they strike the outward senses, we cannot represent them poetically, because when the fancy renews the representation of them, it does not represent them in the same order, and with the same accompaniments.

As all poetry is addressed, or ought to be addressed, to the Fancy, it follows that what is not suited to the nature and rules by which the Fancy acts, can never produce the proper effect, nor be genuine in its character, or quality.

That, which does not strike at once, but of which the meaning is to be attained by laborious deduction, is not poetry.

That, of which the leading circumstance is not seized, or in which the attention is distracted by a detail of more than the leading circumstance, is not poetry.

The more servile, or faithful, the picture is of material or real life, as it actually is, the less poetical it is. Because this is not the picture, which is left upon the mind when the material objects are removed.

When the understanding, when complex reflection, comes in to disturb the natural order and simple colours of the images, as they voluntarily rise in the mind, the effect is something artificial, for which the mind of the reader was not prepared.

There is no end to the varieties of aspect generated by the capricious judgements of the human intellect long pondering on the same subject; and losing sight of the point, whence they set out, in endless labyrinths.

It is the essence of little minds to love artifice; because the attainments of Art are within their reach; whereas the deficiency of natural endowments cannot be supplied.

It may be worth while to endeavour to try these theories by the test of experience. How do they appear to be illustrated by the actual conduct of the greatest poets?

What are Dante's subjects? Are they not the visions of the mind? And does he not present them characterized, and grouped, in the manner in which they appear to the Fancy?

The force of the images presented by his fancy, or created by his genius, gave him a confidence in its power, that rested satisfied without an effort at ornament, or exaggeration.

Does not the same character belong to Milton?

A *Didactic Poem* then is a contradiction. It has for its aim to do that, which is the *reverse* of poetry.

But are there no poetical passages to be found in *Didactic Poems*? — Yes: but then they are not Didactic: they are ornamental patches, incongruous with the professed object of the Work!

---

If this theory be true, does it raise, or depreciate the dignity and use of poetry?

Many will pronounce that it depreciates, because they will say, that in this character, it does not come home to the business of life!

---

If poetry be a representation of our *intellectual* consciousness, not of our *material*, that is, of those images which exist in the *mind*, not of the *external* images themselves, it seems to me that when these images are originally derived externally thro' the senses, they do not take their proper form and character, till the original is entirely removed from them.

The fancied image is therefore a renewal, at some period separated from that when it was first impressed. In the interval, all the degrading and puzzling details sink away;

and leave none , but the striking or characteristic features of the image.

It would seem that the same principle is applicable not only to those images which had their origin in something external , but to all the operations of the mind , whether imagery , sentiments , reasonings , or reflections. Poetry deals , or ought to deal , with them in the state , in which Fancy *renews* them — when the striking parts remain , and the dregs have sunk !

We arrive at a conclusion by a laborious process of ratiocination. We look back upon it at a mature interval : the result , the building remains : the scaffolding has disappeared.

---

The nature of the human mind has been in all ages a difficult study. Locke made great advances in these fields of subtle enquiry ; and in our days Reid , Dugald Stewart and others , have made still farther advances. There are probably mysteries in it , which the human mind is incapable of conquering.

I assume the fancy to be that faculty , which has the power of bringing before the eye of the mind any image , as if it had a material shape. It matters not , whether the materials , or likeness of that image , were originally borrowed from some external object ; or whether by some inscrutable cause , they originated in the mind.

I assume Invention to apply to such of these Images brought before the mind's eye , as have not their archetypes in external material objects : whether the difference arises from novelty of combination only , or novelty of the whole. It is obvious that this may apply to a single image , or a combination of images — to an Allegorical Ode , descriptive of a single ideal Being , or to an Epic Poem.



Memory is the consciousness of what has been ; not the image of it renewed to the mind , as if present.

Fancy may make a poet : but the addition of Invention is necessary to make a poet of the highest class.

And the fancy must deal in images , either beautiful , pathetic , or sublime.

Can we name a poet, of well established reputation , who is a contradiction to this theory?

At various periods of the literature of every country an attention to these principles has not been duly preserved.

As soon as poetry began to be cultivated as an Art, Art too often got the better , and substituted the adjuncts for Principals.

Memory was exercised , instead of Fancy; and things therefore , that were inconsistent with the essence of poetry , formed the materials of productions, which had nothing of the character of poetry but the metre.

## XII.

### PROPER OBJECTS OF AUTHORS.

In addition to the inexhaustible subjects of intellectual observation , which still leave the field open to candidates for literary fame , after all the ground that has been taken by their predecessors , every thing offers something peculiar to itself , and arising out of its own circumstances ; and consequently not presented to the literati of a prior date.

There are also some colours of language , and some elucidations of sentiment , in which every age advances , and improves upon another.

The very change of language, the very novelty of arrangement, sometimes restores the fatigued attention to an useful subject.

He, who talks of his exclusive admiration of old writers, either is a pedant; or merely makes this a pretence to hide his distaste of *all reading*. Men of very high genius rise seldom in the course of centuries : but men not only of erudition, but of genius sufficient to instruct and delight their cotemporaries, are to be found in every generation : and these are men, without whose efforts the intellectual state of society would rapidly deturpate !

If there were no place, but for such great men as Dante and Petrarch and Milton, one must despair. But there are very many seats, far indeed below these ; yet lofty enough for a noble ambition !

There is a great difference between the sense applied to general truths ; and the sense applied to individual expediency. The wisdom of the former extends the fame of men, where they are personally unknown : — Of the latter, confines it to those who are witnesses of the success of their individual conduct. The latter have a tact of hitting on what is most for their own interest ; which is often the reverse of general justice, or general expedience. But how few trouble themselves with the love, or pursuit, of abstract truth !

It is probable, that the exercise of literary genius is nearly, if not intirely, independent of situation in life. Yet Biography relates all the circumstances of the life of a man of genius, as if they formed the essence of the knowlege we wish to have of him.

A genius in poverty and disgrace consoles himself that he shall appear to the world only in his *ideal* character. The tasteless Biographer tears off the veil ; and shews him in all the nakedness of revolting reality.

The Public may love gossiping stories ; and to gratify a prurient curiosity, by an admission into the penetralia of private life. But respect for the person commemorated is as little the object, as it is in general the consequence, of these minute communications.

There is a certain sort of wise and dignified generalisation in almost all the best-written lives of men of genius, or literature. *Boswell* descended from this in his *Life of Johnson* : *Gibbon* was a little inclined to descend from it in his *Memoirs of Himself*.

---

What are the proper purposes of authorship, and how they are to be executed, we are arrived at too late a period of literature to discuss.

But to communicate truths important, yet not trite, in language which unites force with elegance, must be admitted to deserve well of the Public.

Labours short of this may merit encouragement and praise. Whoever conveys useful instruction, or innocent amusement to the mind, does well.

---

The world is inclined to consider those, who pursue their amusements rather than their private interests, as foolish, or unprincipled. But it ought, before it decides, to know what those amusements are; and to examine the character of them. With some, it is an amusement to administer to the innocent and refined pleasures of the Public ; to attempt to enlighten their understandings; or to exercise their fancies and their hearts by beautiful images, or amiable emotions.

Men amuse themselves with equipages, horses, hunting building, society, farming, etc. — is it a crime to amuse

themselves with that, of which the essence consists in conveying pleasure or instruction to others?

If no one were to look beyond Self, what a battle of private interests would the world be? It is the detachment from self, that purifies us; exalts us; and makes us worthy of the love and admiration of others.

The difference between duties, of which the results are immediate both with regard to persons and time, and those, of which the results are, in both those respects, distant, it may be difficult to estimate, or even to define.

The productions of literary genius are for the most part of this sort. It will be asked, if they are a sufficient counterbalance to the omission of more practical and direct duties.

Some of us come into the world to do nothing : some, destined to the highest tasks : some, to perform great practical works : some, to pursue

« The shadowy tribes of thought! »

---

When the Public are too stupid, or too negligent, duly to estimate a man's honourable principles of action, can he set them right by explanation? If we suffer ourselves to be at the mercy of every momentary breath of popular taste, we must lose all self-confidence; and throw away our efforts in the most wavering irresolution.

However it may be denied, no man of sound judgement can doubt, that Milton received little admiration, or notice in his own day, as a poet. Collins obtained no marks whatever of fame or distinction.

---

The representations of the moral, the intellectual, and the material world, are so blended in every true produc-

tion of poetical genius, that Art can never reach these impressions; and neglect can never obliterate them, where nature has implanted them. They have a vivacity, a variety, an inequality, a freshness; which those, who work by rules, never catch.

Moral knowledge ought, unquestionably, to be the first pursuit of the human intellect: but deep moral wisdom was never yet obtained except from the pen, or the lips, of Genius. — Genius only can pierce the recesses of the human bosom; and irradiate its clouds: Genius only can find due language, in which these discoveries can be communicated. Perhaps it may be affirmed, that the language can never be good, where the thought is deficient, or trite: and, on the contrary, that correct, forcible, and original thoughts will always bring with them congenial language. The language springs up with the thought; and none, but that which is thus simultaneous, is excellent, or pure.

All must admit the existence of that moral sense implanted in mankind, which in different individuals so incalculably varies in degree. This sense must be preeminently acute and predominant in a great poet. It must colour the forms and pursuits of his fancy; and shape them to its own direction.

It may perhaps be objected, that many men of indubitable genius, have led immoral and vicious lives; and have been distinguished for their defect of principles. But these exceptions are scarcely ever found in genius of the higher class; and when found, are attended by some circumstances of peculiarity, which may account for their deviation from the general rule.

---

Nothing is more curious than to trace the first appearances of genius, as displayed in childhood, in association with moral qualities.

Original and powerful thought often in its first operations puts on the appearance of stupidity or folly.

He, who is principally intent upon his own ideas, does not often apprehend the ideas of others with the same clearness of perception, as if they were free from the intervention of what his own mind supplies. It often happens therefore, that unoriginal writers are less involved, more digested, and more copious, at an early age.

The sensibility, without which no one can be a real poet, often becomes in the first opening of youth highly morbid. To foster that imagination, in which he deals, he encourages a warmth of temperament, which is very dangerous, when uncontroled.

Authors, who have no heart, may, by the aid of memory, at once write things which are apparently brilliant, and be men of the world. But to frequent the world, and to be endowed with an high fancy, is, at this age, scarcely compatible.

Retirement, and even the deepest solitude, is therefore sought, that a field may be found for the due expanse of the creations of the mind. And the devotee often becomes absent, neglectful of himself, eccentric, and of a childish simplicity and ignorance in the actual affairs of life.

If the circumstances of his lot necessitate the trammels of a profession, this devotedness is most unfortunate : it disqualifies him from bending his attention to what is requisite ; while the strength of imagery, which constitutes his mental excellence, is a light inapplicable to the hard practical forms of things, with which the common business of mankind is carried on.

Perhaps at a later period of life, when the passions calm, and the ideas become more settled, and more under the dominion of the judgement, this conflict lessens, if it does not cease ; and a familiarity and conformity with the habits



of man in society may be united with the indulgence of a rich and pure imagination.

In early youth those images are almost exclusively cherished, of which the pleasure depends solely on the emotion they cause : as years advance, others of a more complex nature are encouraged; and the fruits of reason and moral experience are ingredients which aid in forming the interest of the pictures presented. In these maturer days a deep knowledge of the moving springs of life, and an acute sagacity in discriminating the human character, are superadded to the more brilliant stores, which adorned the poet's youthful mind.

But there is a chaos, before these contending qualities of the mind arrange themselves into their relative places, under which, in many cases, the patient sinks. He experiences the demands of opposites duties; he finds his powers unequal to his ambitions; and he despairs.

If the maxim of « *possunt, quia posse videtur,* » be true; the reverse is also true. With the loss of self-confidence comes inability. We then fall into humble pursuits; and strive to amuse ourselves without effort, when effort can hope no reward.

He, who cannot resist detraction, is utterly unfitted to struggle in society. Mankind are ready and ingenious in degrading; but slow and unwilling to praise. The superiority of others is never acknowledged, till after repeated attempts to cast them down.

It is said, that criticism can only support itself, when it is just. This assertion has not even the semblance of truth : it assumes that readers are capable of detecting bad taste, bad reasoning, bold falsehoods, and unprincipled wit; and that they resist the gratification of malignity, jealousy, and envy.

The fire of high hopes is difficult to be supported amid

the damp of the impending clouds of life, even when encouraged by others : when it has to endure the additional chills of bitterness and hatred, how great must be its strength to surmount extinction! The languor, that follows energetic labours, the waste that accompanies a violent excitement of the animal spirits, are alone obstacles which few have the permanent vigour to contend with.

But I know not why he, who is conscious of his own intellectual gifts, should fret himself about the censures of the malignant, the wanton, or the foolish. They cannot divest him of the endowments, which nature has bestowed; nor finally suppress the notice, which truth and justice will at last confer. Time examines, and sifts, and weighs with precision; and will award the price that shall be due.

### XIII.

#### R O U S S E A U.

Few, if any, characters afford more subjects for reflection, than that of JOHN JAMES ROUSSEAU. No one has drawn forth more bitter censures; and scarcely another has given occasion to so many warm and eloquent panagyrics.

The most enlightened candour is often staggered in the attempt to reconcile the virtues and the faults, the strength and the weakness, of this most extraordinary man.

Many undeserving persons have obtained great celebrity, which has lasted for a short time. But a celebrity, which endures, and even increases, for half a century after death, can scarcely be factitious. It becomes therefore a point of

high curiosity, and profound instruction, to endeavour to discriminate the qualities, on which such a celebrity is founded.

Mere rarity of endowments will little avail in securing a general interest. They must be such, as « come home to every one's bosom ».

I survey with admiration, without being able to analyse, the power, which can light a fire in the hearts of the dull, and the cold. But it seems to be the eloquence of Rousseau, the native and unprompted fervor of his sentiments and images, which gives him the superiority, that eclipses all his competitors. His principles may be sometimes mistaken; his reasonings may be sophistical and dangerous: it is his unexampled sensibility, which melts and enchants the reader. For this there is no substitute in the happiest skill; the deepest learning; and the most vigorous and exalted understanding.

It is clear then, that Rousseau was the slave of his sensations: his reason could never master them: and hence arose the apparent contradictions of his life.

---

#### XIV.

#### FAME FINALLY JUST.



It is a bad symptom of the taste of the public, as it is of Individuals, when extravagance is mistaken for genius. It is only upon truth and propriety, that we can long repose with delight. What touches us in the moment of calm reflection, soberness, and sorrow; what convinces us

as the dictate of cool and impartial wisdom, is alone the standard ore; the plant of perennial verdure.

Though « slow rises worth », by trusting to the simplicity of native genius, it will gradually ascend to its height, and keep on « the even tenor » of its course.

---

Mad. de Stael, in hér *Dix années d'Exil*, p. 17, says :

« Les critiques dont les ouvrages sont l'objet, peuvent être très - aisément supportées quand on a quelque élévation d'âme, et quand on aime les grandes pensées pour elles-mêmes, encore plus que pour le succès qu'elles peuvent procurer. D'ailleurs, le public, au bout d'un certain temps, me paroît presque toujours très - équitable; il faut que l'amour-propre s'accoutume à faire crédit à la louange; car avec le temps on obtient ce qu'on mérite. Enfin quand même on auroit long temps à souffrir de l'injustice, je ne conçois pas de meilleur contre elle que la méditation de philosophie et l'émotion de l'éloquence. Ces facultés mettent à nos ordres tout un monde des vérités et de sentiment dans lequel on respire toujours à l'aise ». —

---

After a life spent in deep attention to Intellectual Biography, I am persuaded that the mental character is not so much dependent on external and-accidental circumstances, as I, in common with the generality of mankind formerly supposed.

It is the union of the qualities of the fancy, the heart, and the understanding in their due proportions, that constitutes the literary genius, of which the fruits are lasting.

Literary excellence is the same in all ages and all countries. It is the search after novelty, that misleads the taste, and pursues objects which, when attained, soon satiate or fade.

Providence has been pleased to dispense her gifts in a mysterious manner. Nature will follow its bent : and when the mind is fertile, it will throw forth flowers, in spite of blights and intermingling weeds.

---

## XV.

SYMPATHY IN THE SENTIMENTS AND  
CONDITIONS OF LIFE.

*Extract from a Letter, 24 May 1821.*

« While I look upon the various habits of opinion, which various occupations universally generate, I am too apt to be disturbed in the unity and equable tenor of my own sentiments, so necessary to that self-complacence, without which there can be neither dignity nor enjoyment.

An anxious mind frets itself that it can find little sympathy with the opinions, and actuating motives of mankind. It *must* go its own way; and it ought to do so, without vexing itself at this discordance! The diversified tasks of human Beings could never be performed, if all had the same tastes, and the same modes of estimating things! One is apt to forget, that contentment with one's lot is necessary to each man's fair passage through life : and how can this be effected but by a variety of judgement applied to motives and ends?

What appear shadows to one, are substances to another! What seem empty vapours to this person, are almost of the essence of existence to his opposite!

« A man » it may be said, « must not be flattered in his

follies and delusions! » — True : — but then comes the question , « what is folly? » and « what is delusion? » The money-getter thinks honour a delusion! The special-pleader thinks an eloquent persuasive speech a delusion !

I would not willingly have that train of ideas torn from me , which has been a shield and a mantle in my misfortunes !

---

## XVI.

### PRAISE OF SCOTT'S NOVELS ; --- AND OF LOVE OF READING.

---

*Extract from a Letter , 6 Oct. 1821.*

« I think that Sir Walter Scott's Novels have afforded a useful and laudable exercise to British Intellects. The fancy they display is vigorous , manly , copious , and original. But there is something too much in them of local and national manners , customs , and histories. And I do not think , that he has drawn the Female Character with sufficient beauty , or refinement.

He brings out his features with so much force ; and he groups his figures so happily ; and he contrasts the grand descriptions and thrilling sentiments of the poet so strikingly with his Comic personages , and his lively dialogues of wit and humour , that he electrifies even the dull and sensual tastes of the multitude.

« Believing , as I do , that the amusement of reading is among the greatest consolations of life ; that it is the nurse



of Virtue; that it is the upholder of Adversity; that it is the prop of Independence; that it is the support of a just Pride; that it is the strengthener of elevated opinions; that it is the shield against the tyranny of all the Petty Passions; that it is the repeller of the Fool's scoff, and the Knave's poison; I consider the man, who has produced the effects, which Scott has done, to be a great national benefactor; and a benefactor, whose good is not transient, but of all times ». —

---

## XVII.

## LAKE OF GENEVA.



*Another extract from the Same Letter.*

« I believe that our intellectual existence is quite as much intended here, as our corporeal! I look across the LAKE, whose blue waves, now agitated by the wind, are breaking into a thousand fragments of sparkling foam, — to the Alps half-enveloped in clouds: — I see at their feet, running hitherward to the edge of the water, the green undulations of Savoy, clad with villas, and hamlets, and cottages, and towers, and steeples! — Is not the multitude of mental images, which I associate with this variety of glittering or misty objects, an existence as certain, according to its own nature, as these material objects, to which it is joined? »

---

## XVIII.

## BEATTIE'S MINSTREL.



The fault of this beautiful fragment of a poem, ( for it is an absolute fragment ), is the barrenness of the design, or story. It wants Incident, where Incident was so necessary ; and might have been so easily invented.

The love of solitude, the delight in abstract pleasures, are proper accompaniments of the genius which was intended to be delineated : but occasional mixture with society, and occasional involvement with its passions and its interests, would have afforded both those sympathies and those contrasts, that exhibit the primary attractions of human imagination.

Man is not intended to be always solitary. He must not continually immerge himself in the coarse deadening turmoils of daily life : but he must sometimes become a party in human affairs ; and feel the force and the sorrows of human affections.

He must look for the materials of his contemplations in Man as he is exalted by sentiment, by intellect, and by morals : as he associates himself with the beauty, or the grandeur of the scenery of nature ; and adds a world of spiritual existences to what is perceptible by the Senses.

Frail and fallen as Humanity is, it is still Humanity which gives the main interest to the fair imagery of this glorious Globe. It is Humanity, such as the sublime poet beholds it in its choicest examples, which calls up our highest energies, and noblest sympathies.

If the Poet has a right to create genius nurtured in the cottage simplicity of entire solitude, and instructed only by the cold world - rejecting counsels of an Hermit, he has also a right to throw him among the grander movements of Mankind; yet separated from their blights, their degradations, and their deformities.

Selection, as well as exaltation, is the Poet's business. He is entitled to contemplate Man in his better moments, undebased by the meannesses of mortal condemnation. Man was decreed to build up his state in society by toil and cultivation; by the long exercise of his mental faculties; by the enduring virtue of the self-denying regulations of the impulses of his heart; by the elevation of his views, and the refinement of his habits. It is then among the human Beings, whom the best refinements of society have lifted into an higher order of existence, that we must look for the occasions that display the most magnificent movements of the Soul.

It was in courts, and camps, and baronial halls, that the young Minstrel ought, as an infant Troubadour, to have learned his lessons. There an aged Mentor, but not an Hermit, unless the Hermit had quitted his cell to accompany his wanderings, might have given him advice, which would teach him how to appreciate the scenes before him, and at the same time would give a living interest to what he taught: while the cold abstract axioms of moral philosophy thrown into verse rather cast a dulness on Beattie's Second Canto, that all his art, and all his genius, cannot surmount.

It is inconceivable how Beattie, whom the very title he chose for his poem would naturally have led to this rich train of incidents and scenery, could prefer so barren and difficult a plan, as he has elected. Perhaps it is to be attributed to the philosophical habits, to which the acci-

dents of his life, rather than his inclinations, addicted him. He had reasoned himself into a horror of the crimes of courts, and the immoralities of society, till he persuaded himself that a poet ought to be an abstract Being.

But whence arise all the grand, the affecting, and the beautiful passages of Shakespeare? — From the complicated passions and complicated duties, which the relations of society have imposed on the character represented!

He, who retires to muse, without having first collected materials to muse upon, commences at the wrong end. Books teach but little of life, unless we can correct them, and bring our apprehension of them to the test, by experience. It is not the business of the poet to represent the mere scenery of nature unanimated by its alliance with the Intellectual Beings, whom Providence has placed to be the lords of it.

Whoever deeply studies the effects of scenery on Man, finds that it soon loses its force, unless the varying affections of the human heart give variety and fresh impulses to its hues and shapes. When it becomes associated with some particular impression of the soul, caused by some one of the innumerable striking incidents of « many-coloured life », the diversity of its colours and interests is endless.

How then could EDWIN learn, what a young Minstrel ought most to learn, by the training which Beattie gives him? How could he conceive those conflicts of Passion, which are not to be imagined in the unbroken solitude of woods and streams and vallies and hills; but must be felt, or observed, in the intercourses of humanity?

There is no power of the mind half so admirable, or half so mysterious, as the Imagination! We often know not whence its images come; nor why they visit us! But they will not take all human shapes without some previous acquaintance with humanity. The stimulants of society de-

velop what human genius unaided by observation could never penetrate.

Of all the parts of history, which would have furnished the most interesting and instructive matter, if the written language had been sufficiently perfect to have handed it down with frankness and judgement, the account of *The Troubadours* would have stood foremost. I cannot believe that those ages were as barbarous, as they are represented to have been. Every where on the Continent, especially in Italy, we see the ruins of magnificent ancient Castles, where now reside none but a most miserable and half-barbarous peasantry. These Castles must have diffused in their neighbourhoods comparative civility, employment, and wealth. The relics, which have come down to us of the compositions of the Troubadours frequently afford instances of a refinement of sentiment and turn of expression, which testify an advance of intellectual cultivation, and a polish of manners, such as modern opinions regarding them seem to be very little aware of.

Beattie would therefore have incurred no impropriety in placing his *Minstrel* in such an age, and amid such manners. Gray complains that this poem wants action; and says that the hero of it ought to be made to produce by the effects of his Art some great National Good. It would have required but a moderate degree of Invention and Ingenuity, to have done this by the Harp of a Troubadour in an hundred ways. He might turn aside the heart of some ferocious Warrior from a cruel design: he might contribute to inflame that Love, of which the influence might be a blessing to a People: he might stir up the soul of some great Captain to avenge the wrongs of his country; and to defend its liberties:

« And if aught else great bards beside  
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,

Of turneys, and of trophies hung,  
Of forests, and enchantments drear,  
Where more is meant than meets the ear ».

For here it is, that

— « Throngs of knights and barons bold,  
In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold,  
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes  
Rain influence, and judge the prize  
Of wit or arms, while both contend  
To win her grace, whom all commend ».

To own the truth, it seems as if Beattie, though an enlightened and excellent man, had a little given way to the infection of the cant of the crimes of courts and kings; and therefore that the purity of his hero's operations ought to keep aloof from any mixture with the manners and events of such society.

However philosophical and just this may appear to some, a wider, more liberal, and more profound view of human nature, will teach a very different lesson. The dignity of rank, the splendor of riches, the dazzle of magnificence, the luxury of refinement, are neither vanities, nor usurpations upon others, when they are the rewards of virtue, and the results of abundant capital duly distributed; and all of them disposed and expended with wisdom, genius, taste, and moderation. Their proper existence stands upon the eternal laws of our nature: it is their abuse only, which is reprehensible.

Beattie might therefore have sent Edwin to strike his Harp to Conquerors and Beauties without exposing to a taint the purity or the sublimity of his poetical occupations. The mind richly-stored, copious in the materials of fancy, and vigorously exercised in the faculties of a creative



imagination, may retire to the depth of woods, that it may have leisure and quiet to digest and new-build what it has gathered. But his formations can be of little worth, whose experience has not been gained in the schools of life, and whose creations are not deeply tinged with the diversified colours of humanity.

The morbidness of Genius may fly with disgust from social man, when fallen from the high purposes of his station : but he flies from man as he is, to contemplate by the comparison man as he might be. He, who has always been

— « Out of humanity's reach ; »

who has never known the delight of the innumerable moral ties, which link us to material existence, wants the foundation of all that makes intellectual invention interesting. The cloud-capt mountain, the smiling valley, the umbrageous grove, the waving wood, and the blue glittering ocean, are nothing, but as they are connected with the haunts, and the feelings of Man (1).

The great beauties of Beattie's poem are the clearness, the elegance, eloquence, and energy of the language ; the harmony of the versification ; the glow of imagery ; and the purity, gentleness, and sweetness of sentiment. These are high merits ; but still they are not all the merits which the best poetry requires. Beattie wants the magician's wand ; that power of vivid creation, which transports, bewitches, and overcomes the reason like a brilliant dream. Every where the hand of the artist is seen ; of the philosopher, the critic, the experienced author : but more especially, of the Metaphysical Lecturer and Controversialist, whose manner of

(1) Campbell has given a very beautiful apology for Edwin's « isolated and mystic abstraction from mankind » : but to me it is not satisfactory. See *Campbell's British Poets*, VII. 43.

instruction and reflection are not at all suited to Edwin's situation and character.

---

Since the above was sent to the Press, I have met with the following passage in the Number just published of the *Edinburgh Review*, which seems to me to coincide entirely with the opinions I have written.

« *The moral improvement to be derived from all narrative, whether it be historical, or what is called fictitious, is in proportion to the degree in which it exercises and thereby strengthens the social feelings and moral principles of the reader. In both cases it excites emotions similar to those inspired by the men and actions which surround us in the world. Our habits of moral feeling are formed by life; — and they are strengthened by the pictures of life. In the perusal of History or Fiction, as in actual experience, we become better by learning to sympathise with misfortune, and to feel indignation against baseness. The narrative of events which have occurred, or which probably may occur, is thus one of the most important parts of the moral education of mankind. It is not however by the common-place and trivial moralities, which may be inferred from, or illustrated by every narrative, that the historian contributes to the morality of his reader. These general conclusions are already known to every child; and nothing has less effect on the character, or feelings, than the repetition of such paltry adages. He can improve his readers only by interesting them; and he can interest them only by that animated representation of men and actions which inspires feelings almost as strong as those which are excited by present realities. Delight and improvement must therefore be produced by the very same means; and if the history of former ages be delightful only when it has the picturesque particularity of original writers, it must depend*

also in part on the study of the same writers for the attainment of its highest purposes (1) ». —

---

## XIX.

## COWPER NO INVENTOR.



I have already said something of COWPER. I am drawn back to him by the remarks arising out of the character ascribed to *Beattie's Minstrel*. Campbell observes of Cowper, that « *as an original writer, he left the ambitious and luxuriant subjects of Fiction and Passion, for those of real life and simple nature, and for the developement of his own earnest feelings, in behalf of moral and religious truth* » — « *He forms a striking instance of Genius writing the history of its own secluded feelings, reflections, and enjoyments, in a shape so interesting as to engage the imagination like a work of fiction. He has invented no character in fable, nor in the drama; but he has left a record of his own character, which forms not only an object of deep sympathy, but a subject for the study of human nature* ».

Admitting this appropriate description of Cowper's poetry to be just : — (and no one will probably be found to controvert it); we must reverse all the acknowledged tests of superiority in Genius, if we place him in a very high class. His life was innocent, virtuous; intellectual; and affords an admirable example of sentiment, reflection, and occupation, to the numbers of mankind whom their fate

(1) Edinb. Rev. July 1821. N<sup>o</sup> LXX, p. 493, in the Article on *Sismondi's History of France*.

throws into rural retirement supported by an humble competence. The distinction between such a delineation of domestic life, and a display of the grand scenes of history, or the magnificent forms of Imagination, is universally understood and undisputed in *Painting*. No one would put a Jansen, a Mireveldt, or even a Teniers, a Breughel, a Ruysdale, against a Raffaele, a Corregio, a Guido, or a Salvator Rosa. To copy Nature with exactness, even though the objects should be both diversified and selected for their beauty, is not the great effort of Genius.

Fancy may be conceded to Cowper; — fancy easy, clear gentle, elegant; yet seldom vigorous; — but, (if imagination implies invention), few poets have shewn less imagination.

There is, however, a passage in his *Task*, which always strikes me to have been the momentary flash of a fine imagination :

« Tis morning; and the Sun, with ruddy orb  
Ascending, fires th' horizon; while the clouds,  
That crowd away before the driving wind,  
More ardent as the disk emerges more,  
Resemble most some city in a blaze,  
Seen through a leafless wood ». —

Perhaps it had been happier for Cowper, if he had indulged his imagination more! If he had wandered farther from *Self*; and forgot the sad realities which often oppressed him, amid the visions of a creative mind! —

How striking must this appear, if we compare him with Tasso, shut in his dismal vault at Ferrara! What gleam of consolation could Tasso receive but by the light of his undimmed and magical imagination? How the heart of a reader sinks even at the distance of more than two cen-

turies at these words in a Letter of Goselini to Aldus, dated Oct. 1582 : « *I have seen poor Tasso in a most miserable state, not in intellect, in which he appeared from a long conversation with him sound and entire ; but from nakedness and hunger, which he suffers in his captivity* (1) ».

Of all the literary anecdotes, which I can recollect, this is the most soul-rending. It excites the most unqualified indignation; the most

— « Grim-visaged, comfortless despair ! »

Yet even here Imagination could supply a balm, and alleviate such unspeakable sufferings ! If ever a deity inhabited a mere mortal frame, it must have been the spirit of a deity in Tasso, which such usage, (the crime that can never be washed out from the House of Ferrara), could not extinguish ! I have seen (2) and entered that dark, damp, narrow, bare-walled, maddening vault ; and never, while the memory of any human misery remains with me, shall I forget it !

Cowper possessed no part of Tasso's magnanimity of soul. He had the feebleness, as he had the simplicity, of infancy. The great tasks of human affairs are not performed by such qualities. The perilous ambition of sublime duties is stimulated by more daring and inventive genius. But I recollect that there are duties for all :

— « God doth not need

Either man's work, or his own gifts ; who best  
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best ; his state  
Is kingly ; thousands at his bidding speed ,

(1) See *Res Literariæ*, II, 142.

(2) On Thursday April 19, 1821, in a Journey from Rome to Venice.

And post o'er land and ocean without rest :  
 They also serve, who only stand and wait (1).

## XX.

## ON MORAL AND DOMESTIC POETRY.

Having in the last articles advocated the more energetic, more sublime, and more fiery traits of poetry, I am willing to admit what has been most ingeniously and most eloquently said on the mild, moral, and practical productions of the Muse; on that, which « comes home to every man's business and bosom ».

I extract with pleasure therefore the following extraordinarily beautiful passages from the *Edinburgh Review*, March 1819, N.<sup>o</sup> LXII, p. 325.

## CRITIQUE ON ROGERS'S POEM OF HUMAN LIFE.

« The Life, which this poem endeavours to set before us, is not Life diversified with strange adventures, embodied in extraordinary character, or agitated with turbulent passions; but the ordinary, practical, and amiable life of social, intelligent, and affectionate men; such, in short, as multitudes may be seen living every day in this country ». —

« The poet looks on Man, and teaches us to look on him, not merely with love but with reverence; and mingling a sort of considerate pity for the shortness of his busy,

(1) Milton's Sonnet *On his Blindness*.



little career, and for the disappointments and weaknesses, by which it is beset, with a genuine admiration of the great capacities he unfolds, and the high destinies to which he seems to be reserved, works out very beautiful and engaging pictures both of the affections by which life is endeared, the trials to which it is exposed, and peaceful enjoyments with which it may often be filled.

« This, after all, we believe, is the tone of true wisdom and true virtue — and that to which all good natures draw nearer, as they approach to the close of life, and come to act less, and know and meditate more, on the varying and crowded scenes of human existence. — When the inordinate hopes of early youth, which provoke their own disappointment, have been sobered down by longer experience and more extended views; when the keen contentions and eager rivalries, which employed our ripener age, have expired or been abandoned, — when we have seen year after year the objects of our fiercest hostility or of our fondest affections, lie down together in the hallowed peace of the grave — when ordinary pleasures and amusements begin to be insipid; and the gay derision which seasoned them to appear flat and importunate — when we reflect how often we have mourned and been comforted — what opposite opinions we have successively maintained and abandoned — to what inconsistent habits we have gradually been formed — and how often the objects of our pride have proved the sources of our shame; we are naturally led to recur to the careless days of our childhood; and to retrace the whole of our career and that of our cotemporaries, with feelings of far greater humility and indulgence, than those by which it had been accompanied: to think all vain but affection and honour; the simplest and cheapest pleasures the truest and most precious; — and generosity of sentiment the only mental

superiority , which ought either to be wished for , or admired ».

---

— « No work ever sinks so deep into amiable minds , or recurs so often to their remembrance , as those which embody simple and solemn and reconciling truths in emphatic and elegant language , — and anticipate , as it were , and bring out with effect those salutary lessons which it seems to be the great end of our life to inculcate. — The pictures of violent passion and terrible emotion ; the breathing characters , the splendid imagery and bewitching fancy of Shakespeare himself are less frequently recalled , than those great moral aphorisms in which he has so often

« Told us the fashion of our own estate ;  
The secrets of our bosoms ». —

and in spite of all that may be said by grave persons of the frivolousness of poetry , and of its admirers , we are persuaded that the most memorable and the most generally admired of all its productions , are those which are chiefly recommended by their practical wisdom , and their coincidence with those salutary intimations , with which nature herself seems to furnish us from the passing scenes of our existence ».

---

« In this poem we have none of the broad and blazing tints of Scott — nor the startling contrasts of Byron — nor the anxious and endlessly repeated touches of Southey — but something which comes much nearer to the soft and tender manner of Campbell , with still more reserve and caution perhaps , and more frequent sacrifices of strong and popular effect , to an abhorrence of glaring beauties , and adisdain of vulgar resources ».

## XXI.

## EXAGGERATIONS OF CRITICAL CENSURE.



The same Number of the *Review* last cited contains the following important confession and apology of the severities of that Journal. It is contained in a Critique *On CAMPBELL'S POETS*. ( See p. 492 ).

« *We are most willing to acknowledge that the defence of BURNS against some of the severities of this Journal is substantially successful, etc.*

» *On looking back on what we have said on these subjects, we are sensible that we have expressed ourselves with too much bitterness, and made the words of our censure far more comprehensive than our meaning. A certain tone of exaggeration is incident, we fear, to the sort of writing in which we are engaged. Reckoning a little too much on the dulness of our readers, we are too often led insensibly to overstate our sentiments in order to make them understood; and when a little controversial warmth is added to a little love of effect, an excess of colouring is apt to steal over the canvas, which ultimately offends no eye so much as our own ».*



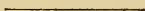
## XXII.

## BUSY AND INTRIGUING AUTHORS.



Petrarch has the following passage in his *Senilia*, *Lib. V.* *Epist. III.*

« Sunt homines non magni ingenii, magnæ vero memoriæ, magnæque diligentiae, sed majoris audaciæ : regum ac potentum aulas frequentant, de proprio nudi, vestiti autem carminibus alienis; dumque quid ab hoc aut ab illo exquisitius in materno præsertim caractere dictum sit, ingenti expressione pronunciant, gratiam sibi nobilium ac pecunias quærunt, et vestes, et munera ».



This passage may be in some degree applied to the character of DAVID MALLET (1), of whom Johnson says, that « His works are such, as a writer bustling in the world, shewing himself in public, and emerging occasionally, from time to time, into notice, might keep alive by his personal influence; but which, conveying little information, and giving no great pleasure, must soon give way, as the succession of things produces new topics of conversation, and other modes of amusement ». —



(1) He died in April, 1765.

## XXIII.

## GENIUS OF BURNS.



There is a genuine charm both about the personal character and about the poetry of *Burns*, which eludes analysis. I sometimes fancy it to be sincerity : the result of an enthusiasm which was never affected; and of a force which was never artificial. But sincerity would be but little, unless it should be a sincerity in what is noble, or beautiful, or amiable. This was the case with *Burns*. He was open to momentary seductions; he could feel unkind passions, or little ones; and when they came, he had not the hypocrisy to conceal them, if he had not the due self-control to suppress them. He might therefore raise fear or dislike, when men more deserving it, escaped it.

The same freedom that shewed his ill-humours, made him more bold in the display of those which were good; and secured a better reception for them.

Every thing in the mind of *Burns* was disposed, or arranged, poetically. The imagination of the poet is exercised in rejection, as well as in addition; in dismissing all but leading circumstances; and in giving effect to the features of what it represents by new positions.

Many of this Poet's Songs are written in his own character; but often under imaginary incidents: when he writes in the character of another, he identifies himself with it; and represents it only under the influence of an imaginative mood.

It is this habitual presence of Genius that renders the

narration of all the little events of his life so attractive. At the plough, at the feast, or strolling on the banks of « the winding Ayr », he is still the same magical Being ; the Bard whose glowing mind no familiar occupation , no practical employment, can cloud.

But of all that the fire of this unqualified, inextinguishable genius produced, ( perhaps of all the short pieces of imagination in the English language ), — the most brilliant , the most electrifying , the most inimitable, is the *TALE* of *Tam o' Shanter* (1).

TAM is returning from the market of Ayr of a dark night. His wife had warned him, before he set out , not to be late , with the reproach ,

« That frae November till October ,  
Ae market-day he was nae sober ».

---

« She prophesy'd , that late or soon ,  
He would be found deep drown'd in Doon ;  
Or catch'd wi' warlocks in the mirk ,  
By Alloway's auld haunted kirk ».

---

« The night drave on wi' sangs an' clatter :  
And ay the ale was growing better :  
The storm without might rair and rustle ;  
Tam did na mind the storm a whistle ».

---

The hour approaches Tam maun ride ;  
That hour, o' night's black arch the key-stane ,

(1) He had originally written this very beautifully in prose in a Letter to GROSE, the Antiquary. See *Censura Literaria*.



That dreary hour he mounts his beast-in ,  
 And sic a night he taks the road in ,  
 As ne'er poor sinner was abroad in .  
 The wind blew as twad blawn its last ,  
 The rattlin show'rs rose on the blast :  
 The speedy gleams the darkness swallow'd ;  
 Loud , deep , and lang , the thunder bellow'd ,  
 That night , a child might understand ,  
 The deil had business on his hand .

---

« Before him Doon pours all his floods ;  
 The doubling storm roars through the woods !  
 The lightnings flash from pole to pole ;  
 Near and more near the thunders roll ;  
 When , glimmering thro' the groaning trees ,  
 Kisk-Alloway seem'd in a bleeze ;  
 Thro' ilka bore the beams were glancing ,  
 And loud resounded mirth and dancing » . —

---

« Now Maggie, the mare on which he rode ,  
 — Ventur'd forward on the light ;  
 And vow ! Tam saw an unco sight !  
 Warlocks and witches in a dance » .

---

« There sat auld Nick , in shape o' beast ;  
 A towsie tyke , black , grim , and large ,  
 To gie them music was his charge » . —

---

—— « Tam stood , like ane bewitch'd ,  
 And thought his very een enrich'd ;

Even Satan glowr'd, and fidg'ed fu fain,  
 And hotch'd and blew wi might and main :  
 Till first ae caper, syne anither,  
 Tam tint his reason à thegither,  
 And roars out « weel done, cutty-sark ! »  
 And in an instant all was dark :  
 And scarcely had he Maggie rallied,  
 When out the hellish legion sallied ».

---

« Now do thy speedy utmost, Meg,  
 And win the key-stane of the brig ;  
 There at them thou thy tail may toss ;  
 A running stream they dare na cross.  
 But ere the key-stane she could make,  
 The fient a tail she had to shake ! »

---

There is no other poem of Burns so characteristic of his powers, his habits, and his manners, as this : of his love of conviviality ; his bold, daring spirit ; his fondness for the sublime features of nature ; his delight in popular superstitions ; his wild and fiery imagination ; the vigour of his conceptions ; and the inspired condensation of his language.

Poetry is here in its true vocation, in embodying those visions of the mind, which vanish like the brilliant shapes and colours that the clouds often momentarily assume. — After all, there are few true pleasures in life, but those which result from imagination. Reality almost always ends in disappointment.

Whether it arises from faculties diluted and misled by tuition and example, or from the sparing degree in which Nature bestows the quantity of her endowments, the generality of candidates for poetical fame waver between the

attempt to describe realities, and the attempt to describe the visionary associations of things.

The presence of the true image was too decided before the mind of Burns, to leave him in any doubt what choice he had to make; and what task he had to perform.

Books of criticism, and the rules of writing, may help forward mediocrity into the attainment of some technical merits; but they often enfeeble or encumber original genius; and sometimes destroy it. Fear of touching topics or images, not already legitimated by example, produces triteness and servility. A timid author is thus driven to describe, not what his own experience has impressed strongly upon him; but what he has borrowed faintly from others.

While therefore the subjects of poetry are inexhaustible, authors continue for the most part to traverse the same dull round; or if they quit it, quit it with rashness, and pursue the bye-ways of extravagance and delusion, instead of the genuine paths of beauty and sublimity which are open to them.

## XXIV.

### D<sup>r</sup> JOSEPH WARTON.

Of D.<sup>r</sup> JOSEPH WARTON (1) I am inclined to speak with respect; and even with affection, if that word may be applied to one whom I never saw. He was a scholar of extraordinary taste and elegance; but I cannot refrain from

(1) Ob. 1800, aged 78.

pronouncing that he has left behind him no proofs of much poetical genius.

I remember that, when I was young, his *Ode to Fancy* was always exhibited to me as a specimen of a genuine poetical spirit. On turning to it, after a lapse of years, with an unprejudiced eye, I am quite astonished at its triteness: it is a mere effort of memory directed by taste; the production of one putting forth his familiarity with every image and every form of expression of Milton's *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*. It not only wants sentiment and thought, but it has not a single original image. There is indeed a passage, which has often been pointed out as fine: but I doubt if this be not the most objectionable passage in the Ode, because it wants even taste!

« Let us with silent footsteps go  
To charnels and the house of woe ».

« Or to some abbey's mouldering towers,  
Where, to avoid cold wintry showers,  
The naked Beggar shivering lies,  
While whistling tempests round her rise;  
And trembles lest the tottering wall  
Should on her sleeping infant fall ».

This image appears to me revolting, because it contains no redeeming pleasure, to counteract the cold anguish which the contemplation of it gives.

Campbell (1) agrees in this opinion of D.<sup>r</sup> Warton's want of originality « *Collins*, » he says, « *realised with the hand of genius that idea of highly - personified and picturesque composition, which Warton contemplated with the eye of taste* ».

How it happens that there are so many minds powerful in the faculty to repeat, but like Echo, without original existence, it would take a long and perhaps a tiresome space to discuss. These men make excellent scholars; — perhaps better than those who think for themselves, because they receive the ideas of others uninterrupted by their own. But the value of their productions is always of a secondary kind. They supply no novelty either in the fields of Imagination, or of Intellect. They want force and freshness; and often therefore rather contribute to make a subject dull and repulsive, than add to its attraction.

Cowper says of Pope, that

« He ( his musical finesse was such,  
So nice his ear, so delicate his touch ),  
Made poetry a mere mechanic art;  
And every warbler has his tune by heart (1) ».

This is so in all ages; the object of momentary fashion is imitated, till the imitation brings even the original itself into contempt.

It must not be understood that D.<sup>r</sup> Warton had no fancy: he had a fancy; but it was an imitative fancy (2), that moved only at the direction of others. I know not that he has shewn any gleams of *Imagination*. But let it be recollected that even Imitative Fancy is a power of a very superior class to Memory!

(1) Table-Talk.

(2) I apply the words *Fancy* and *Imagination* in the way which modern usage has sanctioned, without enquiring into its etymological propriety. I assume *Fancy* to be the reflector of images previously existing; and *Imagination*, to be the power of new combinations.

## XXV.

## THOMAS WARTON.



It has been said of THOMAS WARTON (1), ( the brother of *Joseph* ), that « all his poems are cast in the mould of some gifted predecessor ». This appears to me a most unjust censure. It is hypercriticism to deny him such a portion of originality and imagination , as constitutes great genius.

The judgement of Campbell , it must be admitted , tends to this more unfavourable character. « *His imitation of manner,* » says the critic, « *is not confined to Milton. His style often exhibits a very composite order of poetical architecture* ». — « *From a large proportion of his works an unprejudiced reader would pronounce him a florid unassuming describer, whose images are plentifully scattered, but without selection or relief* ».

This is very severe. I cannot in my most fastidious moments perceive that it has even the appearance of truth. I exclude from the examination the *Laureate Odes*, which were written as tasks. Campbell himself commends the *Hamlet*; the *Crusade*; the *Grave of King Arthur*; and the *Verses to Sir Joshua Reynolds*. This is pretty well, out of the few poems the author wrote; — and he might be content to rest his fame on them. It is the part of candour to judge of a writer by his best works; and not by his worst.

(1) Ob. 1790, æt. 62,



But the Critic forgets , or overlooks , the *Suicide* ; the *First of April* ; the *Inscription for an Hermitage* ; and the *Sonnets*. There may be some affected diction in the *Suicide* , especially at the beginning ; but the whole is the conception of a vigorous and poetical mind ; and the language in many parts is well-suited to the description and the sentiment. The following stanza always delighted me ;

Full oft , unknowing and unknown ,  
 He wore his endless noons alone ,  
     Amid th' autumnal wood :  
 Oft was he wont in hasty fit  
 Abrupt the social board to quit ,  
 And gaze with eager glance upon the tumbling flood.

If it had been said that the author had more fancy than passion , and more imagery than sentiment , this remark could not have been controverted. He is commonly more beautiful than grand : but if he is magnificent , it is the magnificence of description ; not of emotion. This only proves that his excellence did not embrace all the varieties of genius. It is not common to be at once descriptive and sentimental ; although the union increases the charm.

His fancy seems to have been drawn from original sources , and not suggested by books , though it may have been somewhat coloured by them ; and his combinations are his own , though perhaps a little influenced in their form by artificial models. Campbell speaks of his « *minute intimacy of imagination with the gorgeous residences and imposing spectacles of chivalry* ». This is properly expressed ; but it proves , not want of originality , but a due mixture of the materials , of which , on such a subject , poetical creation ought to consist ; a due and characteristic mode of arranging them into ideal structures.

That his fancy and imagination had something of technical about them, arose from the subjects to which he chose to apply them. The feudal times were full of peculiarities, the effects of accident, not the results of our general nature : it demanded long study, and industry, to become familiar with them : and this may have given a form of art and toil to all Warton's compositions, which superficial and indiscriminate critics mistake for want of originality. Genius is generally impetuous ; and disdainful of ceremonies and minutiae : but all genius is not of one stamp. If the production has the charm of genius, it matters not whether the time taken in producing it was much or little.

But then it may be urged that this poet dealt in artificial ingredients ; and that when the materials are bad, the structure cannot be good. But what is the narrowness of principle, which confines the representations of poetry to the works of Nature unimproved by Man ? Or that allows no merit to the *association*, even when the materials are not interesting and dignified in themselves ?

The truth is, that much of Warton's poems requires the reader to come prepared with far more historical and literary information than the generality of those who delight in poetry possess ; and they therefore ascribe their own deficiency of cultivation to his *supposed* want of genius.

It seems to be a strange assumption, that because an author has learning, he cannot copy forms from nature. Johnson has imputed this to Milton ; and, in my opinion, with glaring injustice. Milton's « *images and descriptions of the scenes or operations of nature*, » says the great but prejudiced Biographer, « *do not seem to be always copied from original form, nor to have the freshness, raciness, and energy of immediate observation : he saw nature, as Dryden expresses it, through the spectacles of books ; and*

on most occasions calls learning to his aid. This charge has also been made against Warton : and made, as I feel confident, with entire absence of truth. Every thing bears witness that he was a minute and attentive observer of the scenes of nature which he describes : — the internal evidence of his compositions, the habits of his life, both witness it !

To put him in a class with Milton is indeed to be very indiscriminate. The extent of Milton's invention ; the unapproachable sublimity of his subject ; the grandeur of his intellectual conceptions ; and the mild and heavenly pathos of his softer sentiments, leave the ingenious and even brilliant describer of a few detached scenes of inanimate nature, or of a few gorgeous pictures of Gothic manners, at a distance not to be counted. But it is too degrading to say with Campbell, that Warton is « *the heir of Milton's phraseology, rather than of his spirit ;* » because, on the subjects which he treats in common with his predecessor, he inherits his spirit as well as his phraseology.

I consider the poems of Thomas Warton, though not of the first or second class, to have merit of their own, for which, if they were lost, there would at present exist no substitute in English poetry.

His *History of English poetry* is one of the Works which I esteem to be among the primary ornaments of our National Literature. It unites so many various claims to praise, that it is difficult in speaking of it to do it justice. To all the arts of composition it joins so much original research under the guidance of such exquisite and highly-cultivated taste, on a subject of which he not only perfectly understood the theory, but was himself a poetical and successful artist ; that it at once delights by the charms of genius, and gratifies endless curiosity by its inexhaustible mass of rich materials. No other work occurs to me, in which these

opposite qualities are combined in any eminent degree. Here they are united in the very highest degree, on one of the most interesting and instructive of human subjects.

The Scotch complain that it is not sufficiently philosophical. Are they not apt to introduce philosophy a little too much into matters of taste; and to reason where they ought to feel?

This celebrated History has a character of criticism very distinct from the *Essay on the genius and Writings of Pope* by his brother JOSEPH; which is cursory, light, lively, full of quick taste and simple sensibility, and wanders, with all the airiness of a winged Muse, over the whole expanse of Polite Letters ancient and modern, while the graver Professor dives into researches more profound, and writes in a style more studied and with deeper reflection, what it requires an erudition of far more laborious acquirement, and of much greater maturity of intellectual attention, to relish.

---

## XXVI.

### RARITY OF GOOD POETS.



If any one wishes to ascertain by the test of experience the rarity of such poetical genius, as has combined all the powers and all the circumstances, which have produced good fruit, he need only turn to any large Collection of the best national poetry.

Of 82 authors, of whom specimens are given in the 5.<sup>th</sup> and 6.<sup>th</sup> volumes of *Campbell's British Poets*, not more

than 21 can make any adequate pretensions to the dignified name of POET : and of these last, the pretensions of some are but slight. Among these was CHARLES CHURCHILL : and I confess it is with reluctance that I admit a *Satirist* among Poets, in right of this class of productions. His best eulogy has been pronounced by one, of whose own temper and disposition the extraordinary mildness adds great force to such unexpected praise.

Cowper, in his *Table-Talk* has the following lines :

« Contemporaries all surpass'd, see one ;  
 Short his career indeed but ably run ;  
 Churchill, himself unconscious of his powers,  
 In penury consumed his idle hours ;  
 And, like a scatter'd seed at random sown ,  
 Was left to spring by vigour of his own.  
 Lifted at length, by dignity of thought ,  
 And dint of genius, to an affluent lot ,  
 He laid his head in Luxury's soft lap ,  
 And took, too often, there his easy nap.  
 If brighter beams than all he threw not forth ,  
 'Twas negligence in him, not want of worth.  
 Surly, and slovenly, and bold, and coarse ,  
 Too proud for art, and trusting in mere force ;  
 Spendthrift alike of money and of wit ,  
 Always at speed, and never drawing bit ,  
 He struck the lyre in such a careless mood,  
 And so disdain'd the rules he understood ,  
 The laurel seem'd to wait on his command :  
 He snatch'd it rudely from the Muses' hand ».

I believe that Cowper was personally acquainted with Churchill (1). At least he was familiar with Robert Lloyd,

(1) Churchill died 1764, æt. 33.

Churchill's most intimate friend. When we consider Cowper's morbidly timid, and gentle character, this seems very strange.

There may be genius in the force and distinctness with which characters are conceived and delineated : but if it be bitter and revolting, it does not often find sympathy among the nobler classes of imagination, who delight in the grandeur of virtue, rather than of wickedness.

But whatever may have been the moral character of Churchill, and however ill-directed the virulence of his Satires, he possessed a very uncommon vigour of mind; a fervor, that cannot be denied to have been genius.

It was far ortherwise with many, whose names have found their way into these rolls of Helicon. Here we see MM. Oldmion, Weekes, Bramston, L. Welsted, Amhurst Selden, Colley Cibber, R. Dodsley, E. Ward, B. Booth, John Brown; MM. Whyte, and Dwight, Henry Carey with his *Sally in our Alley*; and G. A. Stevens with his *Lecture on Heads*.

But there are better names than these, which we could almost spare. There are authors, who often approach to the very verge of good poetry; and then grasping out their arms, embrace a vapour, and false inspiration. Of this character I deem *Thomas Penrose* (1): nor can I hesitate to pronounce the same condemnation on *John Langhorne* (2).

Yet it is singular that LANGHORNE has produced a passage of singular beauty and force, to which few in the whole body of English Poetry can be compared.

It is from his Poem of *The Country Justice*, where the benevolent author pleads to the Magistrate for candour and mercy towards those, whom pressing want and the powerful call of famine lead into crime.

(1) Ob. 1779, æt. 36.

(2) Ob. 1779, æt. 44.



« For him , who , lost to every hope of life ,  
 Has long with fortune held unequal strife ,  
 Known to no human love , no human care ,  
 The friendless , homeless object of despair :  
 For the poor vagrant feel , while he complains ,  
 Nor from sad freedom send to sadder chains.  
 Alike , if folly or misfortune brought  
 Those last of woes his evil days have wrought ;  
 Relieve with social mercy , and with me ,  
 Folly's misfortune in the first degree.  
 Perhaps on some inhospitable shore  
 The houseless wretch a widow'd parent bore ;  
 Who then , no more by golden prospects led ,  
 Of the poor Indian begg'd a leafy bed.  
 Cold on Canadian hills , or Minden's plain ,  
 Perhaps that parent mourn'd her soldier slain ;  
 Bent o'er her babe , her eye dissolved in dew ,  
 The big drops mingling with the milk he drew ,  
 Gave the sad presage of his future years ,  
 The child of Misery , baptized in tears ! » —

I cannot account for the momentary inspiration, by which one, who is in general an affected, frothy, and sickly writer, could produce such lines (1).

[1] If Campbell is sometimes not very nice as to those, whom he admits, he sometimes overlooks with not a little injustice. He has given no place to D<sup>r</sup> *Sneyd Davies*, a genuine poet and amiable man, for whom see *Nichols's Literary Anecdotes*; nor to M.<sup>rs</sup> *Elizabeth Carter*; whose merit cannot be questioned; nor to the tender and elegant *Charlotte Smith*; nor to Anna Seward; Robert Jephson; James Hurdis; Russell; Thomas Warwick; Jenner; Walters; D.<sup>r</sup> Delap; James Scott; D.<sup>r</sup> Ogilvie; Soame Jenyns; O. Cambridge; W. B. Stevens; R. Hole; etc., etc.

## XXVII.

## SHENSTONE (I).



Every thing has two views; a right and a wrong side : what Johnson says of Shenstone may be appropriate ; — but it regards always the ill-temper'd side. The Biographer's memoir of this poet is a specimen of the degrading manner, which he assumed in his latter writings. He was of the same College with Shenstone, and scarcely more than four years his senior in age : perhaps he had left Oxford, before the other's arrival.

It is true that there is a feeble and unmanly tenuity in most of Shenstone's pieces, which fails to make a due impression on the fancy, or to exercise the understanding. « *Had his mind been better stored with knowlege,* » says Johnson, « *whether he could have been great, I know not ; he could certainly have been agreeable* ». This is one of those sentences of caustic and half-colloquial contempt towards his cotemporaries, in which the Critic delights to deal. But is it not somewhat beyond the line of due severity to imply that the author of the *Elegy on Jessy*; of the *Pastoral Ballad*; and of the *School-mistress*, had not even reached the point of being « *agreeable ?* » Yet he praises the Ode on *Rural Elegance* for its meaning and poetical spirit, ( a praise which it scarcely deserves ); and cites two passages from the *Ballad*, « *to which* » he says, « *if any mind denies its sympathy, it has no acquaintance with*

(1) Wm Shenstone died reb. 11. 1762, aged 48. —

*love or nature* ». And recommends the *School-mistress* for a sort of merit, which seems to me of a very paltry kind.

I do not think that Campbell is more happy or more just in his encomiums than in his censures of this poet. He observes that « *his genius is not forcible, but it settles in mediocrity without meanness* » and that « *some of the Stanzas of his Ode to Rural Elegance seem to recall to us the country-loving spirit of Cowley subdued in wit, but harmonized in expression* ». Now Campbell well knows the condemnation which *mediocrity* in poetry universally incurs : and as to the similarity of the Ode to the spirit and sentiments of Cowley, few things on the same subject can be more unlike. The dissimilarity is a strong illustration of what Johnson with his piercing sagacity remarks of Shenstone's taste applied to rural ornament : « *The pleasure of Shenstone was all in his eye ; he valued what he valued merely for its looks* ». Almost all the sentiments of the Ode thus compared to Cowley are in conformity to this. The sources of Cowley's delight in a country-life are much deeper and more varied : nor are the sentiments, which are conveyed, merely subdued in wit ; they are copiously and even effeminately dilated in expression ; and so far from being improved in harmony, that a varied and vigorous harmony is ( with very few exceptions ), the characteristic of that portion of Cowley's poetry.

It is upon the *Elegy on Jessy* that Shenstone must depend for the perpetuity of his fame. It is a model of elegance, purity, and harmony of sentiment, imagery, and language. But even this wants force : it has a feminine sort of gentleness.

He had also a female vanity : he adorned his grounds at the Leasowes, that he might have the praise of others for what he had done ; — not that he might enjoy them himself.

Whether he would have done better in studying men and manners than in augmenting the beauties of inanimate Nature, may be doubted. It is not a slight good, which he performs, who strengthens the allurements to solitude.

## XXVIII.

## GOLDSMITH (1).

Perhaps there is not a Poet, of whom I entertain so decided a difference of opinion from Campbell, as of GOLDSMITH. That this author should be popular among common readers, is not surprizing. And if the position were true, which Lord Byron has ventured a little too hastily, that « *the poet is always ranked according to his execution, and not according to his branch of the art* (2); the Critic would have a better foundation for the praises which he thus lavishes, than according to the just principles of classification he can lay claim to.

In execution, Goldsmith has the merit of propriety of thought; fidelity of description; and clearness, facility, and finish of diction. But these are not the highest charms of Poetry. We want something more than *propriety* of thought, and *fidelity* of description! We want fire, grandeur, pathos, selection, novelty, invention!

The *Deserted Village* is a very languid and sickly performance. It has a monotonous querulousness, which lowers

[1] Ob. 1774, æt 47.

[2] Letter on *Bowles's Strictures*.

the spirits, and leaves an impression of insipidity on the whole scenery. It is when things are magnified and new-shaped by the mists of Imagination, that they possess the attractions given by the Poet's wand. To paint scenery and manners with the exactness of a Dutch Painter, requires scarcely any other faculties than a clear perception and a lively memory. Goldsmith brings forward many of those petty particularities, over which Genius and Taste throw a veil.

It is in vain that the critic pleads that the « *quiet enthusiasm* » of his favourite « *leads the affections to humble things without a vulgar association ;* » and that « *he inspires us with a fondness to trace the simplest recollections of Auburn, till we count the furniture of its ale-house, and listen to*

« The varnish'd clock, that click'd behind the door ».

The vulgar association is so strong, that if all before had been beautiful and magical, it would at once have dissolved the charm.

« The chest contrived a double debt to pay,  
A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day;  
The pictures placed for ornament and use;  
The twelve good rules, the royal game of goose;  
The hearth, except when winter chill'd the day,  
With aspen boughs, and flowers and fennel gay;  
While broken tea-cups, wisely kept for show,  
Ranged o'er the chimney, glisten'd in a row ».

How can such images as these be admitted into the visions of the mind without placing us in the midst of all the homeliness and chill of poverty? What are the circumstances of a peasant's life, which Gray siezes upon?

« The breezy call of incense-breathing Morn ;  
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed ;  
The cock's shrill clarion, and the echoing horn ,  
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed !

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn ;  
Nor busy huswife ply her evening care :  
No children run to lisp their sire's return ;  
Nor climb his knees the envied kiss to share ».

This is not less simple and pure than the language of Goldsmith ; yet how exquisitely picturesque and poetical ! Gray thus proves that poetical imagery of the most genuine spirit is consistent with the simplest and purest language. There is not therefore much merit due to him , who purchases a clear diction at the expence of mean ideas !

That Goldsmith was a man of very extraordinary talents ; a man of clear , ready , cultivated and multifarious reflection ; a moral philosopher ; a philologist , and an elegant historian , will be generally admitted ; but that either the furniture of his mind , or his taste , was eminently poetical , may reasonably be questioned. He was for the most part rather an harmonious versifier , than a poet. Indeed he scarcely ever rises above this character in his *Deserted Village*.

His *Traveller* , which Campbell deems inferior to it , is not only far more vigorous and varied in diction and rhythm , throughout the whole composition , but is infinitely more poetical both in imagery and sentiment. It has scarce any of the languid drawl of the other ; but is often vigorously condensed ; and excites admiration by a force of axiomatic wisdom which displays the brilliant grasp of genius. Such , for instance is his sketch of Italy.

« Far to the right where Appenine ascends ,  
Bright as the summer Italy extends ;



Its uplands sloping deck the mountain's side ,  
 Woods over woods in gay theatric perid ;  
 While oft some temple's mould'ring tops between  
 With venerable grandeur marks the scene.

Could Nature's bounty satisfy the breast ,  
 The sons of Italy were surely blest.  
 Whatever fruits in different climes were found ,  
 That proudly rise, or humbly court the ground ;  
 Whatever blooms in torrid tracts appear ,  
 Whose bright succession decks the varied year ;  
 Whatever sweets salute the northern sky  
 With vernal lives , that blossom but to die ;  
 These here disporting own the kindred soil ,  
 Nor ask luxuriance from the planter's toil ;  
 While sea-born gales their gelid wings expand  
 To winnow fragrance round the smiling land.

But small the bliss that sense alone bestows ;  
 And sensual bliss is all the nation knows.  
 In florid beauty groves and fields appear :  
 Man seems the only growth that dwindles here ».

These lines possess a merit far above mediocrity ; but they will not stand a severe criticism : they are more remarkable for propriety than for excellence : the epithets are general rather than picturesque ; and the sentiments, if just, have not much either of novelty or of force ; all the sentences are so balanced ; and there is such a tiresome uniformity in the verses , that the magic is destroyed by the palpable marks of the artist's hand. There is also in the matter too much of cold calculating philosophy ; and too little of poetical fire.

The description of SWITZERLAND is more vigorous :

« My soul , turn from them ; turn we to survey  
 Where rougher climes a nobler race display ,

Where the bleak Swiss their stormy mansion tread ,  
And force a churlish soil for scanty bread ;  
No product here the barren hills afford ,  
But man and steel , the soldier and his sword :  
No vernal blooms their torpid rocks array ;  
But winter lingering chills the lap of May ;  
No zephyr fondly sues the mountain's breast ;  
But meteors glare , and stormy glooms invest.

Yet still , even here , content can spread a charm ,  
Redress the clime , and all its rage disarm.  
Though poor the peasant's hut , his feasts though small ,  
He sees his little lot the lot of all ;  
Sees no contiguous palace raise its head  
To shame the meanness of his humble shed ;  
No costly lord the sumptuous banquet deal  
To make him loath his vegetable meal ;  
But calm , and bred in ignorance and toil ,  
Each wish contracting , fits him to the soil.  
Cheerful at morn , he wakes from short repose ,  
Breathes the keen air , and carols as he goes ;  
With patient angle trolls the finny deep ,  
Or drives his vent'rous ploughshare to the steep ;  
Or seeks the den where snow-tracks mark the way ,  
And drags the struggling savage into day.  
At night returning , every labour sped ,  
He sits him down the monarch of a shed ;  
Smiles by his cheerful fire , and round surveys  
His children's , looks , that brighten at the blaze ;  
While his lov'd partner , boastful of her hoard ,  
Displays her cleanly platter on the board :  
And haply too some pilgrim , thither led ,  
With many a tale repays the nightly bed.

Thus every good his native wilds impart  
Imprints the patriot passion on his heart ;

And e'en those ills , that round his mansion rise ,  
Enhance the bliss his scanty fund supplies.  
Dear is that shed to which his soul conforms ,  
And dear that hill which lifts him to the storms ;  
And as a child , when scaring sounds molest ,  
Clings close and closer to the mother's breast ,  
So the loud torrent , and the whirlwind's roar ,  
But bind him to his native mountains more ».

---

Now mark, what is the magic and the perfection of GRAY's strains in the same identical line of Poetry. I am not sure that the difference will strike those who are not gifted with a very nice taste. But it seems to me that the superiority of Gray is both various and most essential. It consists in compression , force , originality , imagery , diction , profundity of thought , ardour and justness of sentiment ; and diversified harmony of rhythm. At the same time it is equally perspicuous , polished , and simple.

The difference which belonged to the moral habits ; the adventitious circumstances of education and station ; and to the bodily temperament of these ingenious men , may be traced in the tone and colouring of their productions. The impressions of one were light , superficial , transitory ; excited by , and contented with momentary plausibility ; formed to catch popular attention ; and directed to the means of at once supplying an income , and gratifying an inordinate and almost childish vanity. The impressions of the other were the result of long meditations in the closet ; in a state of independence ; in the search of truth only ; removed from the misleading influences of society ; fastidious of vulgar applause ; doubtful if what he wrote would ever see the light ; possessed of a masterly familiarity with whatever was most perfect in classical models ; and intimate

with all the rules and all the technicalities by which beauties might be improved and faults avoided. These advantages were great; but GRAY had also others. If not of an high family, he had from a boy been principally familiar with men of the higher ranks.

To many this may seem neither any recommendation, nor to give any weight to his opinions. From long and calm reflections on the tendencies of poetical organizations and the natural propensities inherent in the characters of mankind, I am firmly persuaded that it has great effect in producing rectitude and elevation of sentiment. He, whose subsistence depends on the whim of others, must be subjected to the strongest temptation to forego the freedom of opinion. That, which is called speculative, visionary, and empty, by those who are occupied in the daily provisions of self-interest, is habitual to the generality of those, of whose early pupillage the lessons have not been disturbed by the incessant contests of personal preservation and personal interest. What is called a *liberal éducation* is not a name of empty words. It teaches a tenor of sentiment, of which those condemned by Providence to meaner occupations have no conception.

A college-life is liable to torpor : it wants the purification, and the stimulus to activity ; which the conflicting gusts of society produce : but where the native energies of the mind are incapable of being laid asleep, there the various opportunities given by quiet, exemption from worldly anxieties, the furniture of public libraries, and the collision of learned conversation, contribute to expand the productions of genius into fruit of more maturity and higher flavour, than could otherwise have been raised.

The influences of the world are in constant opposition to the higher operations of the mind. All that gratifies the ambition, which is not merely visionary and spiritual, must

he sought by attentions and cares, that withdraw the intellect from the toils and energies, by which the loftiest kind of literary excellence is reached.

Goldsmith's improvidence, and his restless and dissipated habits; the place of his residence; the companions with whom he associated, all tended to render that intensity of abstraction, by which Genius performs its primary wonders, unattainable. A coarse passage of Johnson may be cited to this purpose, which I wish he had not introduced at the place, in which it occurs, ( the life of the magical and inspired Collins ). « *A man* » says the surly biographer, « *doubtful of his dinner, or trembling at a creditor, is not much disposed to abstracted meditation, or remote inquiries* ».

All therefore that has been done by Goldsmith, might be caught upon the surface. He has no *curiosa felicitas* : nothing of which a common mind cannot see both to the bottom, and all that is intended. Perhaps it is the very simplicity, lightness, and neglect of research, which is his charm : a sort of intuitive talent of siezing what lay the very uppermost of the top; and throwing off every thing superfluous to it.

Gray, meanwhile, in the safe and fearless privacy of College apartments, pondered over the profoundest subjects with an undisturbed force of meditation, repeated year after year, till the very intensity hazarded a mistake of the native character of what he contemplated. But he had no temptations to error from the delusive mists of passion or interest. The world had neither promotions nor distinctions to offer him. He had in his own possession the means of independence : he sought not the notice of Rank : he had something which approached to contempt of popular fame : his main satisfaction, exclusive of the pleasure of the immediate employment, probably arose from the proof he afforded to himself of his own skill.

It is probable that Goldsmith had no settled opinions on any thing. Facility of perception, and clearness of language, were his strength, and his delight. He had a quickness, which dazzled, and won instant applause. *He always*, says Johnson, *seemed to do best that, which he was doing.*

I may be asked, why this anxious comparison between Goldsmith and Gray, poets of so very dissimilar an order? I answer, because in so many works of criticism of the last thirty years, there has been an attempt to put them, at least incidentally, in rivalry! — To me the dissimilitude is so essential and so marked, that they appear perfect contrasts!

Since Literature has become so extensively a mercenary profession, it requires little sagacity to perceive how strong an interest authors have to decry the tests of excellence in composition required by Gray. *Vendibility* then becomes the measure of value: and it is the business, not to please the enlightened; but the multitude. The Motto to Gray's two Pindaric Odes was sedulously rejected in this school.

The reader shall have an opportunity of judging the question between Goldsmith and Gray by a close comparison. For this purpose Gray's exquisite Fragment shall be here introduced at length.

#### FRAGMENT ON EDUCATION.

*By Thomas Gray.*

« As sickly plants betray a niggard earth,  
Whose barren bosom starves her generous birth,  
Nor genial warmth, nor genial juice retains  
Their roots to feed, and fill their verdant veins:  
And as in climes, where winter holds his reign,  
The soil, though fertile, will not teem in vain,  
Forbids her germs to swell, her shades to rise,  
Nor trusts her blossoms to the churlish skies:



So draw mankind in vain the vital airs ,  
Uniform'd , unfriended , by those kindly cares ,  
That health and vigour to the soul impart ,  
Spread the young thought , and warm the opening heart :  
So fond Instruction on the growing powers  
Of nature idly lavishes her stores ,  
If equal justice , with unclouded face ,  
Smile not indulgent on the rising race ,  
And scatter with a free , though frugal hand ,  
Light golden showers of plenty o'er the land :  
But tyranny has fixed her empire there ,  
To check their tender hopes with chilling fear ,  
And blast the blooming promise of the year.  
This spacious animated scene survey ,  
From where the rolling orb , that gives the day ,  
His sable sons with nearer course surrounds ,  
To either pole , and life's remotest bounds ;  
How rude so-e'er the exterior form we find ,  
How-e'er opinion tinge the varied mind ,  
Alike to all the kind , impartial heav'n  
The sparks of truth and happiness has giv'n :  
With sense to feel , with memory to retain ,  
They follow pleasure , and they fly from pain ;  
Their judgement mends the plan their fancy draws ,  
Th' event presages , and explores the cause ;  
The soft returns of gratitude they know ,  
By fraud elude , by force repel the foe ,  
While mutual wishes , mutual woes endear  
The social smile and sympathetic tear.  
Say , then , through ages by what fate confin'd  
To different climes seem different souls assign'd ?  
Here measur'd laws and philosophic ease  
Fix , and improve the polish'd arts of peace.  
There industry and gain their virgils keep ,

Command the winds, and tame th' unwilling deep;  
Here force and hardy deeds of blood prevail;  
There languid pleasure sighs in every gale.  
Oft o'er the trembling nations from afar  
Has Scythia breath'd the living cloud of war;  
And, where the deluge burst, with sweepy sway,  
Their arms, their kings, their gods were roll'd away.  
As oft have issued, host impelling host,  
The blue-eyed myriads from the Baltic coast.  
The prostrate south to the destroyer yields  
Her boasted titles, and her golden fields;  
With grim delight the brood of winter view  
A brighter day, and heavens of azure hue,  
Scent the new fragrance of the breathing rose,  
And quaff the pendent vintage as it grows.  
Proud of the yoke, and pliant to the rod,  
Why yet does Asia dread a monarch's nod,  
While European freedom still withstands  
Th' encroaching tide, that drowns her lessening lands,  
And sees far off with an indignant groan  
Her native plains, and empires once her own.  
Can opener skies and suns of fiercer flame  
O'erpower the fire, that animates our frame,  
As lamps, that shed at eve a cheerful ray,  
Fade and expire beneath the eye of day?  
Need we the influence of the northern star  
To string our nerves and steel our hearts to war?  
And, where the face of nature laughs around,  
Must sick'ning virtue fly the tainted ground?  
Unmanly thought! what seasons can control,  
What fancied zone can circumscribe the soul,  
Who, conscious of the source from whence she springs,  
By reason's light, on resolution's wings,  
Spite of her frail companion, dauntless goes

O'er Lybia's deserts and through Zembla's snows ?  
 She bids each slumber'ing energy awake ,  
 Another touch , another temper take ,  
 Suspends th' inferior laws , that rule our clay ;  
 The stubborn elements confess her sway ;  
 Their little wants , their low desires , refine ,  
 And raise the mortal to a height divine.

Not but the human fabric from the birth  
 Imbibes a flavour of its parent earth.  
 As various tracts enforce a various toil ,  
 The manners speak the idiom of the soil.  
 Au iron-race the mountain cliffs maintain ,  
 Foes to the gentler genius of the plain :  
 For where unwearied sinews must be found  
 With side-long plough to quell the flinty ground ,  
 To turn the torrent's swift-descending flood ,  
 To brave the savage rushing from the wood ,  
 What wonder , if to patient valour train'd ,  
 They guard with spirit , what by strength they gain'd !  
 And while their rocky ramparts round they see ;  
 The rough abode of want and liberty ,  
 ( As lawless force from confidence will grow )  
 Insult the plenty of the vales below !  
 What wonder , in the sultry climes , that spread ,  
 Where Nile redundant o'er his summer bed  
 From his broad bosom life and verdure flings ,  
 And broods o'er Egypt with his watery wings ,  
 If with advent'rous oar and ready sail ,  
 The dusky people drive before the gale ;  
 Or on frail floats to neighb'ring cities ride ,  
 That rise and glitter o'er the ambient tide.

\* \* \* \* \*

Whoever can read these twenty four last lines without a

delight in which all the faculties of the mind are at once gratified, is in my opinion, one whose taste and intellect are hopeless. Compare Goldsmith's finest passages with any part of this Fragment. Now and then, it is true, that he rises in his *best* lines to the *common* texture of Gray, as for instance in the description of the Swiss, when he says

« He drives his ventrous ploughshare to the deep :  
Or seeks the den where snow-tracks mark the way,  
And drags the struggling savage into day ».

And again, when he speaks of Holland :

« Methinks her patient sons before me stand ,  
Where the broad Ocean leans against the land ,  
And sedulous to stop the coming tide ,  
Lift the tall rampire's artificial pride.  
Onward, methinks, and diligently slow ,  
The firm connected bulwark seems to grow ;  
Spreads its long arms amid the watery roar ;  
Scoops out an empire, and usurps the shore :  
While the pent ocean rising o'er the pile ,  
Sees an ambitious world beneath him smile ».

But see how Gray, while he never falls *below*, more frequently rises *above* this tone !

« Say, then, through ages by what fate confined  
To different climes seem different souls assign'd ?  
Here measured laws, and philosophic ease  
Fix, and improve the polish'd arts of peace.  
There Industry and Gain their vigils keep,  
Command the winds, and tame th' unwilling deep.  
Here force and hardy deeds of blood prevail ;  
There languid Pleasure sighs in every gale.

*Oft o'er the trembling Nations from afar  
Has Scythia breathed the living cloud of war ;  
And , where the deluge burst with sweepy sway ,  
Their arms , their kings , their gods were roll'd away ! »*

But Goldsmith often falls into flatnesses , and mean and depressing imagery ; such as

« Here may be seen, in bloodless pomp array'd,  
*The paste-board triumph , and the cavalcade ! »*

And part of the description of the life of a Swiss peasant, whose :

—— « Loved partner, boastful of her hoard,  
*Display her cleanly platter on the board ! »*

But it must be admitted that these defects much less often occur in the *Traveller*, than in the *Deserted Village*.

It is said, that Johnson added some of the latter paragraphs, especially the last, to the *Traveller*. It seems to me, that not only at the close, but a little more backward, there are marks of a mind much more original and more forcible than Goldsmith's.

In the *address to Freedom*, in which it is said that there is no good without alloy, is the following nervous and striking couplet :

« Here by the bonds of nature feebly held ,  
Minds combat minds , repelling and repell'd » . —

And again,

———— « As nature's ties decay,  
As duty , love , and honour fail to sway ,  
Fictitious bonds, the bonds of wealth and law ,

Still gather strength, and force unwilling awe.  
 Hence all obedience bows to these alone,  
 And talent sinks, and merit weeps unknown;  
 Till time may come, when stript of all her charms,  
 The land of scholars, and the nurse of arms,  
 Where noble stems transmit the patriot flame,  
 Where kings have toil'd, and poets wrote for fame,  
 One sink of level avarice shall lie,  
 And scholars, soldiers, kings, unhonour'd die! »

---

Here the writer has proved himself a sagacious and true prophet. I fear that the time he predicted has already arrived. The ties of nature; of blood; friendship; alliance; duty, have almost ceased to operate. The « *Bond and nothing but the bond*; » the law, and nothing but the law, is only to be relied upon!

---

## XXVIII.

## BIBLIOMANIA.



*De la Bibliomanie*, 8.<sup>o</sup> Privately printed, à la  
 Haie, 1761. Tripook's Catalogue for 1821,  
 N.<sup>o</sup> 156.

« C'est un Spectacle comique que de voir un Bibliomane  
 a qui le Temps et l'Argent sont à charge, qui pour amuser  
 son oisiveté, pour tâcher de se délivrer de la lassitude de  
 ne rien faire et de ne rien savoir, s'établit une place et



assiste journellement aux ventes de Livres, les examine tous sans en connoître peut-être aucun, encherit, non comme un Amateur intelligent, mais comme un homme riche, prêt à acheter au poids de l'or des volumes dont il n'a que faire, tandis qu'il en soustrait l'acquisition à un Connoisseur qui en a besoin. De retour chez lui, cet avide et insatiable enchérisseur met ses premiers soins à donner une place à ces nouveaux livres : il les touche peut-être pour la dernière fois ». P. 18, 19. Mais après tout ce qu'on dit de la Bibliomanie, c'est le plus sensible et le plus intéressant de tous les Manies du Jour ». Extracted (as above) from *Trip-hook's Catalogue for 1821. N.º 156 (1)*.

---

This title, and judiciously-written Extract, give an opportunity of saying a few cursory words on *Bibliography*. It is difficult exactly to define where utility ends, and mere whim begins, in this science. It cannot be questioned that a great number of very learned and very ingenious early Books are little known, and of infrequent occurrence : though there may be numerous volumes, which have no other value than that of their rarity. The rarity may consist in the work itself; or in the edition only : in either case the just value of that rarity must follow the intrinsic character of the matter. There are good reasons for preferring an *editio princeps*, when the production itself has merit.

But the Bibliographical Notices, which are compiled for the purpose of literature, are formed upon quite different principles, and with quite different views from those made by Booksellers for the purpose of forwarding the sale of the articles of their trade. A Book may have very little value in commerce, which is exceedingly curious to the scholar, the critic, the historian, or the antiquary ; — and the reverse as often happens. Nor is it from the value of the

(1) See Santander's Catalogue, vol. 4, p. 169.

articles taken separately; but from the recognition, the new combination, the juxta-position, that the mind is exercised and gratified; and a recurrence to the test of ancient opinions and ancient forms of language promoted and facilitated.

An author, whose name is familiar to us only by slight, though frequent, mention, scattered through the volumes of general literature, or by references still more brief and enigmatical, is brought into prominent observation by the pen of a judicious Bibliographer; and he, who has neither time nor opportunity to collect, what lies scattered among the masses of so many volumes in so many countries, may thus obtain a fund of information, which every highly-cultivated mind will know how to appreciate.

Volumes beyond enumeration, of great interest, may be collected, which bear a low price, because no one has set the fashion of enquiring for them.

Gibbon once intended to have compiled a *Catalogue Raisonn'e*, of the works used in his great *History*. How inestimably curious and instructive would such a compilation have been?

## XXIX.

### QUALITIES OF THE HISTORIAN AND POET DIFFERENT.

The Historian and Biographer have to perform a task very different from that of the poet. Their judgement and their memory are more called into exercise than their fancy;

and their imagination cannot operate at all, except under the very strictest controul. It may sometimes under this controul, be a lamp to them in penetrating motives, and laying open what the veil of time has covered. We therefore sometimes see men, who had not sufficient brilliance of genius to excell in Poetry, to which they aspired early in life, afterwards become eloquent and admirable in History. Such was Lord Clarendon, who has recorded in the Memoirs of Himself, that his early life was spent in the company of Ben Jonson, Waller, Carew, Cotton, Sydney Godolphin, Lord Falkland, etc.

It was this society, and the cultivation of the studies which it fostered, that gave to this great Statesman such an insight into the human character. The formal parts of History convey as little instruction, as delight.

Lord Clarendon's merit is the more extraordinary, because his was *cotemporary* history.

« Time « say the *Edinburgh* critics » performs the same services to events, which distance does to visible objects. It obscures, and gradually annihilates the small; but renders those, that are very great, much more distinct and conceivable. If we would know the true forms and bearings of a range of Alpine mountains, we must not grovel among the irregularities of its surface; but observe from the distance of leagues the directions of its ridges and peaks; and the giant outline, which it traces on the sky (1) ».

On the contrary, there are great evils in the mode of composing *After-histories* for the purposes of mere fame, or vendibility.

« *C'est la malice* » ( says Bayle ) « *c'est l'animosité, ou bien l'envie de s'accommoder au goût populaire, et d'en tirer du profit, qui engagent a falsifier les relations* (2) ».

(1) *Edinb. Rev.* N.<sup>o</sup> LX. Sept. 1818, p. 278.

(2) *Bayle*, art. DU BELLAI, *Note F*.

## XXXI.

S P E N S E R.

---

Spenser has language for all that appears to have presented itself to his mind. The distinctness, the brilliance, the copiousness of his imagery, is amazing. The variety, the flow; the energy; the swell of his versification, have never been rivalled. He wants the deep, and gloomy sublimity of Dante : he wants his concise, and overwhelming pathos. His imagination was so multitudinous, that it sometimes verged on the Fantastic.

---

## XXXII.

DEMI-ANCIENTS.

---

The following observations by Le Clerc in his Criticism on *J. A. Campanus*, regarding those whom he calls « *Demi-Ancients*, » is worth extracting.

« Les Auteurs Italiens du temps de *Jean-Antoine Campano*, qui fleurissoit au milieu du quinzième siècle, un peu avant et un peu après l'invention de l'Imprimerie, font à présent un effet tout particulier sur nôtre imagination. Nous

ne les regardons , ni comme des Modernes , ni comme des Anciens ; mais comme je ne sai quoi , qui tient le milieu. Nous nous intéressons dans leur histoire , beaucoup plus que dans celle de habiles gens qui ont vécu de nôtre temps ; et nous n'avons néanmoins par pour eux le respect , que nous avons pour ce qui nous appellons l'*Antiquité*. C'est ce qui a fait que quelcun de ma connoissance les a nommez *Demi-anciens* , et peut-être que dans quelques centaines d'années , l'éloignement les fera confondre avec ceux , qui ont vécu long-temps avant eux. Parmi ces Auteurs , à qui l'on commence à rendre en partie le respect , que l'on a pour l'*Antiquité* , je ne mets que ceux qui ont eu quelque goût pour les Ecrits des meilleurs siècles , qu'ils ont tâché d'imiter ; car pour les Scholastiques , leurs obscures rêveries , habillées d'une latinité tout à fait barbare , ne sont plus au goût que de ceux qui leur ressemblent ; ou qui ne sont choquez ni de ce qui blesse le Bon - Sens , ni de ce qui blesse les oreilles accoutumées à un meilleur stile.

La considération , que l'on a pour les *Demi - anciens* , pour continuer à me servir de ce mot , a fait que l'on a reçu avec beaucoup de plaisir toutes les nouvelles Editions des Auteurs Italiens ; qui ont vécu depuis le commencement du quinzisième siècle , jusqu'au milieu du seizième , et qui ont écrit avec quelque politesse. Comme les Belles-Lettres commencèrent à renaître en Italie , et que l'on a de l'empressement pour toutes les nouveautez , il y eut alors une infinité de gens , qui écrivirent , avec beaucoup d'elegance , des Lettres , des Harangues , des Histoires , et des Vers , en Latin ; entre lesquels fut *Campano*. On n'étoit pas encore alors assez savant , pour faire des Ouvrages de Critique et de Philologie ; comme ceux que l'on fit depuis , pour éclaircir ce qu'il y a de plus obscur dans l'*Antiquité*. Le savoir consistoit principalement à pouvoir écrire poliment , en vers et en prose ; plutôt qu'à expliquer les ténèbres des

Anciens. Ces productions étoient comme des fleurs, qui naissoient en des campagnes fertiles, que l'on vit ensuite pleines de fruits; dès quelles eurent été cultivées, quelque peu de tems. Quoi qu'il n'y ait pas tant à apprendre, dans les Ecrits de ces premiers de la renaissance des Lettres, on les lit néanmoins avec plaisir; et l'on pourroit dire, sans beaucoup hasarder, qu'il falloit avoir plus d'esprit pour les faire, que pour compiler des Ouvrages beaucoup plus doctes. Ces pieces, qui ont coulé du seul génie des Auteurs, amusent l'esprit plus agreablement, que les Recueils, et le délassent des lectures plus sérieuses et plus pénibles».

*Le Clerc, Bibliothèque Choisie, Tom. XIV, pag. 56, 57, 58.*

---

### XXXIII.

#### HUME.

---

An Englishman must feel great interest in the History of France for at least eight centuries. It is so blended with that of his own Country, that one cannot be clearly understood without the other. It is singular that of neither of them has the General History been satisfactorily written. We are supposed to have carried away the palm from France by the superior literary merits of three Great Historians — Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon.

Whatever may be the clearness of Hume's style, and the force of his philosophical genius, his History of England has always appeared to me deficient both in nerve, and in necessary details. I would not have wished



him to have either written as an antiquarian ; or to have descended into prolix particularities : but there are still numerous little circumstances , of which the relation adds not merely to the interest , but to the perfect conception of the most important events. There seems indeed some doubt whether the taste and genius of this great author ever allowed him to add minuteness of knowledge to the enlarged and general views with which he had studied this subject. He wants therefore distinctness of colouring , and variety of form in his delineations.

In Memoirs , and particular Histories , though we have a few which are excellent , we cannot enter , on the whole , into comparison with the French.

---

---

## XXXIV.

### ORIGINAL WRITERS.



How much of what has been already told , it may be proper to tell again ; what is sufficiently brought to notice , if it remains in the language and types of old books ; what requires the recognition of modern phraseology , and modern judgment ; what requires to be more effectually enforced by new words , and new modes of illustration , are questions , which it requires great taste , sagacity , talent , and experience to answer.

The number of original thinkers is small : the number of those , who can so far combine their materials anew , as to entitle themselves to the praise of belonging even to the lowest class of inventors , is still smaller.

Of the great mass of what is published by Travellers, the materials, the descriptions, and the sentiments, are especially barren, and jejune.

But a man who possesses the acquirements of literature, combined with even moderate skill in composition, and moderate ingenuity, may write a pleasing and useful book on almost any subject with which he is conversant.

---

He, who accustoms himself at every opportunity to let out the secrets of his heart; to record the abundant and overflowing sentiments which a mind endued with feeling and fancy is perpetually employed in giving birth to, makes every subject, which he handles, the vehicle of this sort of interest.

It is impossible but that new situations should give, to those who indulge in these habits, copious occupations for their favourite employment.

---

## XXXV.

### TRAVELLERS.

---

I am not one of those who think that by residing in the Capital of a Foreign Nation a few days, or a few weeks, by walking the streets, and seeing the people and their shops, and public places, one can penetrate into their characters, extract their political opinions, and discover the political objects, which they are secretly contriving to bring about. These things may be better learned by research and reflection.

tion at home. But it is the lively excitement which a visit to the spot gives to read attentively books which would otherwise be neglected ; and to pursue vigorously considerations, which would otherwise be abandoned, or carelessly followed ; it is this, which gives rise to the knowledge to be obtained by such visits.

As to the information which Tourists and Travellers generally affect to convey, whether in volumes of Narrative, or by Letters, it is not only so barren, but so utterly superfluous, were it not barren, that to me no class of Books is more disgusting or more contemptible. No country is I believe at present unprovided with ample statistical information, drawn with all the advantages of leisure, and local information, and of access to official documents and personal experience. In France for instance, what can a Traveller tell as the results of his enquiries pretended to be made on the spot, regarding the Towns through which he passes, which is not already told, with particularity and certainty, in the *STATISTIQUE* of that great Nation ! A few pert observations regarding the surface of manners and habits, which may not strike a native, or would scarcely be deemed worthy of his notice, if they should be remarked by him, make no amends for pages of useless dulness.

---

## XXXVI.

### FAME.

---

Every character must finally rest on its positive strength in the qualities on which its pretensions to Fame are put forth. No artifice, or adventitious aid will long avail.

Fame is very often obtained surreptitiously : but it cannot last.

What is talent? What is genius? What is mere learning? Surely these are positive possessions, which may be distinctly defined !

« *Esse quam videri* » is a maxim, generally, but not universally, true.

There are those, who believe that there is nothing substantial but wealth, which is *power* !

They who have wealth, are often willing to pay it away for distinction : and they, who have distinction, would often willingly exchange it for wealth.

---

## XXXVII.

### PHILOSOPHERS AND POETS.

---

The philosopher considers it to be his business to examine every thing by the eye of reason ; to divest every object of prejudices and false lights ; and to represent things as they are ; not as he would wish them to be.

The poet endeavours to perpetuate the transient colours of his fancy ; to paint things with the delusive attractions, which his desires put upon them ; and to enjoy himself in a world such as his mind aspires to, rather than such as our fallen nature is placed in.

Each of these opposite intellectual powers, and opposite applications of them, has its advantages.

## XXXVIII.

## BIRTH.



There are men of erudition, and authors also, without talent. Books without end may be made by those who want talent ; and some of them useful. But it is talent, which consecrates the importance of an author to the world.

Books are easily compiled : great information, vast erudition, are acquirable without great difficulty. Original powers of thinking are rare. Brilliance, strength, profundity, wisdom, in those powers, are rarer still.

The public are severe in examining the pretensions to notice, which an individual urges in his own favour. If they are in any respect not true, or not legitimate grounds though true, sneers, ridicule, scorn are the consequences.

BIRTH is a pretension, which is seldom admitted. There is a general tendency to be sceptical as to the facts : but if admitted, they are not considered solid claims to distinction.

The public probably carries the prejudice the other way, a great deal too far : but the matter requires to be managed very delicately, and applied with great skill, to raise any of that favour, even in the minds of the most candid and intelligent, which it is intended to effect.

Among the impolicies involved in its nature is this : that its elevation is an elevation to an equality with all the fools and mean wretches, who may enjoy the same descent ; in lieu of an equality with the worthy rivals, whom, if this test be admitted, it depresses.

« *A master-mind !* » What is a master-mind ? What are the marks and proofs of it ? Who may be confident of possessing it ? It is imagination ; sentiment ; the faculty of reasoning ; the talent to examine, distinguish, and decide : the command of language ! — There must be added to this energy , elevation of spirit ; enthusiasm ; love of the sublime ; devotion to the past , and the future ; a preference of the immaterial to the material ; and an emancipation from vulgar desires and passions !

Can the frailties of humanity ; can the intermixture of some common faults , destroy the character ? Is all the private and selfish prudence of an individual who gives his whole petty mind to his own individual interests , required in this character ? — If required , that which is impossible , is required !

No man is , or ought to be , of any interest in the world but by his virtues , his genius or powers of intellect , or his knowlege. Rank , property , and high birth , may perhaps be considered to give a claim : but they are nothing , if unillustrated by one of the others !

## XXXIX.

## THE SAME.

It would be difficult to define with precision what would make the Memoirs of a particular Family interesting to the Public. The most probable seem to be facts that ally it historically with events of a public nature.



There are not a great many Historical Families in Europe.

It creates a mysterious sort of veneration, when they lose their origin in the darkness of Time : when the source, like that of the Nile, extends beyond research : when the æra cannot be found, at which it had not risen above the ground !

---

It has been pretended, that the lustre of a family, if true, does not rest upon the written history of it. The facts, it is said, will speak for themselves.

But the facts may be scattered, overlaid with rubbish, and can only shine in judicious, and elegant combination. They may be like diamonds in the mine, incrustated in dirt.

---

## XL.

### THE SAME. — HOUSE OF BOURBON.

---

Five degrees of distinguished Descent may be pointed out : premising, that when speaking of one family opposed to another, the male line is to be understood ; and that the circumstances to be mentioned, as raising one in the scale of eminence above another, are to be considered as adjuncts.

I. The first degree is mere antiquity.

II. The second is antiquity combined with possession of the same territories.

III. The third, the addition of high alliances.

IV. The fourth, Historical celebrity.

V. All these, combined with the highest rank in point of dominion and power, form the top of the scale.


According to all these tests it is impossible to hesitate to what sovereign House of Europe to give the preeminence.

In all these qualities the HOUSE OF BOURBON is so superior as to leave every other House at an interminable distance. It is probable that the Houses of BRUNSWICK, LORAINÉ, and SAVOY are quite as ancient : but they want the same splendor in most, if not all, of the adjuncts. BADEN is also classed with these in point of antiquity, by Koch, who asserts that none of the other SOVEREIGN HOUSES of Europe can go beyond the 12<sup>th</sup> century. He means of course to confine this assertion to the possession of their present sovereignty. For otherwise the House of HESSE ( a branch of the Dukes of Brabant ), and perhaps others, can go ages further back.

---

## XLI.

### T H E S A M E.



To spring from those, who have commanded in the world, not merely by their rank and territory, but by their intellectual superiority, is a subject of fair gratification.

Even the general reader is prepared to receive with a lively interest whatever is connected with history : and especially with those parts of history, which are striking or instructive in themselves. The worthies of a single Nation which has filled an important part in the world, excite a strong and just attention in our minds. But how much more those of all the principal Nations from whose alliances, or conflicts, with each other, the whole picture is formed ! Groups drawn

from such an extended surface throw a multiplied light on each other. France, England, Flanders, Spain, Italy, and Germany, all afford materials, with which all the intelligent parts of Europe are linked by a thousand ties.

---

## XLII.

## M É M O I R S.



It is easy to understand why the public take an interest in Memoirs, which disclose all the minutiae of a man's life; and lay every thing bare to a prying curiosity. They love to gratify a gossiping appetite; to indulge their thirst for the degradation of others; and to find out that Genius has its weaknesses, and its mortifications, like themselves. Just in proportion as they are pleased, is the object of their enquiry humiliated.

The very cause of the taste of these anecdote-hunters, is that, which should prevent an author from furnishing them food of this kind regarding himself.

I know not why there should be more deceit in the exhibition of the best and happiest parts of a man's mental and moral character, than in a portrait, which paints him in his best looks, and most becoming dress.

*Nemo omnibus horis sapit :*

And no one is an hero to his Valet-de-Chambre.

It is well for frail humanity to be sometimes good; and sometimes great : to have occasional fits of noble thought, or tender and beneficent virtue !

## XLIII.

## COPYRIGHT.

*Extract from the Critique on the Copyright Question-Quarterly Review, May 1819. N.<sup>o</sup> XLI, p. 212.*

« It has been stated in evidence, that Copyright in three cases out of four is of no value a few years after publication ; at the end of fourteen years scarcely in one out of fifty, or even out of a hundred. Books of great immediate popularity have their run, and come to a dead stop. The hardship is upon those, who win their way slowly and difficultly, — but keep the field at last.

And it will not appear wonderful that this should generally have been the case with books of the highest merit, if we consider what obstacles to the success of a work may be opposed by the circumstances and obscurity of the author, when he presents himself as a candidate for fame, by the humour or the fashion of the times, the taste of the public, (*more likely to be erroneous than right at all times*), and the incompetence or personal malevolence of some unprincipled Critic ; who may take upon himself to guide the public opinion ; and who, if he feels in his own heart that the fame of the man whom he hates is invulnerable, endeavours the more desperately to wound him in his fortunes. And if the copyright (as by the existing law), is to depart from the author's family at his death, or at the end of 28 years from the first publication of his work, if he dies before the expiration of that term, his representatives in such a case

are deprived of the property just when it is beginning to prove a valuable inheritance.

« The decision which Time pronounces upon the reputation of authors, and upon the permanent rank which they are to hold, is unerring and final. Restore to them that perpetuity in the copyright of their works, of which the law has deprived them, and the reward of literary labour will ultimately be in just proportion to its deserts. If no inconvenience to literature arises from the perpetuity which has been restored to the Universities, ( and it is not pretended that any has arisen ), neither is there any to be apprehended from restoring the same common and natural right to individuals, who stand more in need of it.

» However slight the hope may be of obtaining any speedy redress for this injustice, there is some satisfaction in thus solemnly protesting against it, and believing as we do, that if Society continues to advance, no injustice will long be permitted to exist after it is clearly understood, we cannot but believe that a time must come, when the wrongs of Literature will be acknowledged; and the literary men of other generations be delivered from the hardships to which their predecessors have been subjected by no act or error of their own ». —

## XLIV.

### LA FONTAINE.



*Extract from La Vie de La Fontaine — before the  
Stereotype Edition of his Fables. Paris 1799.*

« La gloire pour ceux mêmes qui en sont le plus dignes,

et qui font tout pour l'obtenir, est une espèce de jeu de hasard où ce qu'on appelle *la bonheur* n'est pas moins nécessaire que la science et l'adresse. Tacite observe même qu'il y a des hommes auxquels il tient lieu de vertus. L'expérience prouve en effet qu'avec les qualités les plus éminentes dans quelque genre que ce soit, ou n'est rien sans la fortune, ou, si l'on veut, sans ce concours fortuit de circonstances et d'événements imprévus qui dévoilent le mérite et qui le font remarquer. On peut juger par-là combien il est rare qu'un homme doué de grands talents, mais assez philosophe pour attendre tranquillement que la gloire vienne le chercher, jouisse enfin de ce fruit de ses travaux : La Fontaine mourut avant de l'avoir recueilli, car sa réputation, du moins celle qu'il méritoit, ne s'étendoit guère au-delà du cercle étroit de ses amis ». *P. LI, LII.*

Again. *P. XXX.*

« A l'égard du peu de succès de ses Fables dans un siècle d'ailleurs aussi éclairé que celui de Louis XIV, on en est d'abord étonné ; car on ne peut nier qu'elles n'aient trouvé plus d'admirateurs parmi nous que parmi ses contemporains, qu'elles ne soient plus lues, plus goûtées, mieux appréciées, plus senties. Mais il me semble que se fait s'explique très-naturellement, et qu'on en peut rendre ces deux raisons. La première, c'est qu'un bon livre dans un genre ou personne encore ne s'est exercé, une grande découverte dans les sciences ou dans les arts, en un mot, un homme de génie, poète ou philosophe, géomètre ou mécanicien, est une espèce de phénomène, auquel il importe beaucoup de se produire dans certains temps et dans certaines circonstances : s'il se montre avant que les esprits soient préparés, il ne fait aucune sensation, et est à peine aperçu : c'est un rayon de lumière qui perce l'intérieur d'une caverne, l'éclaire un moment, et s'éteint. La seconde, etc. ».



## XLV.

FRAGMENT OF AN INSCRIPTION ON  
SANNAZARIUS.

*Written at Naples July 20. 1820.*

On yonder vine-clad hill he fix'd his seat;  
 He gazed upon that Bay, where now I gaze;  
 He look'd on yonder sea-girt isle (1), that lifts  
 Its mountain-head amid the azure waves;  
 He look'd on yonder dim-seen Town (2), whose roofs  
 Faint-glittering on the shore, recall the fame  
 Of Him, the future Bard (3), he was not doom'd  
 To see burst forth in glory on the world!  
 He look'd on yon gigantic hill (4), whose top  
 And sloping sides vomit out liquid fire!  
 Amid the umbrageous covering; lapse of rills;  
 And distant murmur of the hollow wave,  
 Lulling his day-dreams, he forgot his cares,  
 And gave his spirit to the enrapturing Muse;  
 Forgot the painful pomp of Courts; its frown,  
 When smiles are most deserved; its faithless smiles,  
 When ruin most is plotted; the mix'd bowl;  
 The secret dagger hid in beds of flowers;  
 The toil without reward! . . . . .  
 . . . . .

- (1) Capri.  
 (2) Sorrento.  
 (3) Tasso.  
 (4) Vesuvius.

This may be a proper place to give some Extracts from the Latin Poetry of SANNAZARIUS.

---

*Ad Villam Mergillinam.*

Rupis o sacrae, pelagique custos;  
Villa Nympharum domus, et propinqua  
Doridos, regum decus una quondam,  
Deliciaeque;

Nunc meis tantum requies Camænis;  
Urbis invisas quoties querelas,  
Et parum fidos popularis auræ  
Linquimus æstus :

Tu mihi solos nemorum recessus  
Das, et hærentes per opaca laurus  
Saxa; tu fontes, Aganippidumque  
Antra recudis.

Nam simul tete repeto; tuasque  
Sedulus mecum veneror Napæas :  
Colle, Mergillina, tuo repente  
Pegasis unda

Effluit, de qua chorus ipse Phœbi,  
Et chori Phœbus pater, atque princeps,  
Nititur plures mihi jam canenti  
Ducere rivos.

Ergo tu nobis Helicon, et udæ  
Phocidos saltus, hederisque opacum  
Thespiæ rupis nemus, et canoro  
Vertice Pindus.

I, puer, blandi comitem laboris  
Affer e prima citharam columna;  
Affer et flores; procul omnis a me  
Cura recedat.

Principis nostri decus, atque laudes  
Fama, per latas spatiosa terras,  
Evehat, qua Sol oriens, cadensque  
Frena retorquet :

Quaque non notos populos, et urbes  
Damnat æternis Helice pruinis ;  
Quaque ferventes cumulos arenæ  
Dissipat Auster.

Ille crescentes veneratus annos  
Vatis antiquum referentis ortum  
Stirpis, et clarum genus, et potentum  
Nomen avorum ;  
Contulit large numerosa dextra  
Dona : et ignavæ stimulos juventæ  
Addidit, silvas, et amica Musis  
Otia præbens.

---

*Deos Nemorum invocat in extruenda Domo.*

Di Nemorum, salvete ; ego vos de rupe propinqua,  
De summis patriæ mænibus adspicio :  
Adspicio, venerorque : cavæ mihi plaudite valles ;  
Garrula vicinis perstrepat aura jugis.  
Vos quoque perque focos felicia dicite, cives,  
Verba, per intactas flore decente vias.  
Victima solennes eat inspectanda per aras,  
Turbaque Palladia fronde revincta comas.  
Mosque ut ab antiquæ repetatur origine Romæ,  
Exterior forda cum bove taurus aret.  
Ac prius infesso tectum quam cingere sulco  
Incipimus, justos ture piate Deos.  
Nulla per obductum decurrant nubila cælum :  
Candidaque augustum concinat omen avis.

Exsurgat paries, ventos qui pellat, et imbres;  
Qui multa circum luce serenus eat.  
Adsit dispositis series concinna columnis;  
Quæque ornet medias crebra fenestra fores.  
Ipse biceps primo custos in limine Janus,  
Occurrat lætis obviis hospitibus.  
Protinus a dextra sacræ, mea turba, Sorores  
Cingant virgineis atria prima choris.  
A læva niditis stratum Pythona sagittis  
Miretur posita Cynthius ipse lyra.  
Ædibus in mediis parvi sinus amphitheatri  
Visendas regum præbeat historias.  
Ac primum triplici sese defendat ab hoste  
Fernandus rapido jam metuendus equo.  
Alfonsusque pharetratas, dira agmina, gentes  
Cogat Hydruntinis cedere litoribus.  
Tum juvenis Rex ipse, et Regum insignibus auctus  
Alpinos agatip linquere castra Duces.  
Postremo Federicus, avito lætus honore,  
Dalmaticas grandi classe refringat opes.  
Infestosque Deos, metuendaque jura minatus,  
Indicat Nato bella gerenda suo.  
Hic bene conveniens membris variantibus ordo  
Adspiciat celebres e regione situs.  
Exhedræ, xystique, tablinum, hypocausta diætæ,  
Et quæ privatis usibus apta velim.  
Atque aliæ Occasus, aliæ vertantur in Ortus,  
Quæque habeant Boream, quæque inhibere Notum.  
Jungantur longis quadrata, obliqua rotundis:  
Et capiat structos plurima cella thoros.  
O studiis placitura meis, o mille per artes  
Otia Pieriis nostra juvanda modis.  
Hic ego tranquillo transmittam tempora cursu;  
Dum veniat fatis mitior hora meis.

Viximus ærumnas inter, lacrimosaque Regum  
Funera : nunc patria jam licet urbe frui :  
Ut quod tot curæ, tot detraxere labores,  
Restituat vati Parthenopea suo.

---

*Carmen Latinè redditum ex poemate Italico Sannazarii.*

Ripam gramineam super  
Fluminis nemore in vago,  
Quod semper virides novis  
Pingunt floribus herbæ.

Ductorem pecoris sacræ  
Vidi Palladis arboris  
Cinctum tempora frondibus  
Jam sub tegmine fagi.

Qui dum lux nitida extulit  
Se undis cærulei maris,  
Tertio caneret die  
Martis ante Calendas.

Cujus picti avium chori  
Responsum numeris dabant  
Voce suavidica simul  
Sub leni arboris umbra.

Isque, ad splendida lumina  
Ut se vertit Apollinis  
Pulchri, dulcia fundere  
Cœpit carmina avena.

Alme lanigeri gregis  
Custos è thalamo exiens  
Aurato irradiat tuo  
Claro lumine cœlum.

Nativisque coloribus  
Duc extempore floridum

Nunc ver omnigenis sinum  
Mille floribus ornans.  
Tendas altius, atque iter  
Per cœlos agitans equos,  
Ut præter solitum soror  
Mergatur mare vasto,  
Quam lætos meditantia  
Choros usque nitentium  
Sectentur pede candido  
Stellarum agmina cuncta.  
Nam linquens Superûm domos  
Pavisti niveas oves,  
Admæi ad vaga flumina  
Olim, si meministi  
Valles, vosque reconditis  
Rupes vallibus additæ,  
Aspirate, Abies mihi,  
Et cupressus, et Alnus.  
Nec fætus ovium magis  
Infectos metuant Lupos;  
Ast orbis redeat prior,  
Et Saturnia regna.  
Et per celsa cacumina  
Jam fagi pariant rosas  
Albas, sentibus et rubens  
Duris pendeat uva.  
Stillent mellaque roscida  
Altis quercubus, integris  
Latè fontibus effluat  
Ruri copia lactis.  
Floribus niteat novis  
Tellus atque animalia  
Pellant duritiem procul  
Cuncta è pectore sævo.



Assultentque Cupidines

Hinc mille aligeri, at faces  
Nunc abdant rapidas simul,  
Ardentesque sagittas.

Et cantus nemorum Deæ

Candidæ moveant choros,  
Et Fauni hircipedes, Dei  
Silvarumque virentum.

Rideantque nitentia

Prata, et garrula fontium  
Lympha, ac diffugiant polo  
Astra nubila toto.

Ipso hoc purpureo die

Advenit decor æthere  
Ab alto, ac superùm sacra  
E domo inclita virtus.

Quare erroribus obrutus

Cæcis plurima sæcula  
Nunc pudicitiam polo  
Delapsam videt orbis.

Fagorum hoc ego cortice

Scribo in saltibus omnibus,  
Ut plantæ virides sonent  
Nunc omnes Amarantam.

Amara hæc mihi pectoris

Eluit, miser ut graves  
Luctusque, et gemitus traho  
Corde tristis ab imo.

His dum montibus aviis

Errabunt celeres feræ  
Pascentes, geret ardua et  
Frondes Pinus acutas.

Currentque impete limpidi

Fontes murmure blandulo,

Quos illa excipiat sinu  
 Molli semper amore.  
 Dum spes, atque dolor premet  
 Illos anxius, intima  
 Quorum pectora commovet  
 Aura dulcis Amoris.  
 Nomen, luminaque, et manus,  
 Crinisque illius, hæreat  
 Quæ mi sæviter ossibus,  
 Noscent omnia sæcla.  
 Quam sævam modò, et asperam  
 Vitam ducimus efficit  
 Hæc, ut mi lepida, et simul  
 Dulcis esse videtur.  
 Cantilena precabere,  
 Si quisquam lepor est tibi,  
 Faustus ac nitidus, dies  
 Ut sit mi usque serenus.

ANTON. RAIUS,

---

*In Morum Candidam.*

Nunc, Erato, virides capiti subnecte corymbos;  
 Profer et auratæ fila canora lyræ.  
 Arboris umbriferæ casus referamus acerbos.  
 Non erat hæc nostro fabula nota solo.  
 Audiat, et molli cantantes protegat umbra  
 Ipsa, . . . . .  
 Olim Bajanis fuerat pulcherrima silvis  
 Naias, errantes figere docta feras.  
 Quam liquidus clausis Lucrinus sæpe sub antris  
 Optavit lateri jungere posse suo.  
 Nec semel illius pharetram laudavit, et arcum  
 Pastorum incultis fistula carminibus.

Testes Cumææ, testes Linternides undæ,  
Sanctaque Gauranæ Numina Hamadryades,  
Illam Silvanos, Panalque odisse bicornes,  
Et quoscumque colit silva, nemusque Deos  
Sed quid fata parant? Solitis Mornina redibat  
Montibus: hoc illi nomen, et omen erat:  
Quum subita cælum texit caligine nimbus;  
Et multa canam grandine fecit humum.  
Illa hiemem fugiens, diversa per arva cucurrit,  
Tecta caput sertis, grandine tecta caput.  
Vallis erat prope sulfureos male pervia montes,  
Candida quam Grajo nomine signat humus.  
Hanc super excisis pendebat cautibus antrum,  
Agricolùm hirsutis nota domus gregibus.  
Pugnantes huc forte coëgerat impiger hircos  
Semideusque caper, semicaperque Deus.  
Quem procul ut vidit, Nymphæ; sic pectore toto  
Insequitur; tales et jact ore sonos:  
Quo properas, ah dura, measque ingrata querelas  
Despicis? Aspectus ne fuge, Nympha, meos.  
Mecum capreolos, mecum venabere damas.  
Parebit jussis hoc pecus omne tuis.  
Nil est, quod fugias: mihi, crede, recentia semper  
Pocula de niveo fagina lacte madent.  
Semper picta rosis, semper contexta ligustris  
De nostro poteris munera ferre sinu.  
Dixit, at illa volans celeres prævertitur auras,  
Imbre nihil motos impediende gradus.  
Jamque petens tristesque lacus, sterilemque paludem;  
Consitaque arbustis non minus arva novis,  
Adspicit exesi longe sub faucibus antri  
Obscurum cæco pulvere noctis iter.  
Huc tamquam in latebras, se coniecit, haud minus ille  
Insequitur prædæ tractus amore suæ.

Jamque patens cælum rursus , Solemque videbat ;  
Liquerat et montem post sua terga cavum :  
Dextra pontus erat , præruptaque saxa sinistra :  
Et jam defessam , jamque premebat amans.  
Protinus exclamans , fer opem mihi , Delia , dixit :  
Oraque supremo diriguere sono.  
Attulit auxilium Nymphæ Dea ; seque vocanti  
Præbuit : illa cadens sponte recumbit humi :  
Fitque arbor subito : Morum dixere priores ;  
Et de Morinna nil nisi nomen habet.  
Pesque in radicem , in frondes ivere capilli ;  
Et quæ nunc cortex , cærula vestis erat.  
Brachia sunt rami , sed quæ nitidissima poma ,  
Quas male vitasti , Nympha , fuere nives.  
Flevit Misenus , mutatam flevit Avernus ;  
Fontibus et calidis ingemuere Dææ.  
Quin etiam flevere suis Sebethrides antris  
Najades , et passis Parthenopea comis.  
Sed tamen ante alios lacrimas in stipite fudit  
Faunus ; et hæc tristes addit ad inferias :  
Inter silvicolas O non ignota Sorores ,  
Nunc Morus , duris candida corticibus :  
Vive diu ; et nostros semper tege fronde capillos ;  
Cedat ut ipsa tuis Pinus acuta comis.  
Tu numquam miseræ maculabere sanguine Thisbes :  
Immemor heu fati ne videare tui.  
Tu , nec fata negant , niveis uberrima pomis ,  
His olim stabis frondea limitibus :  
Et circum puerique canent , facilesque puellæ :  
Ducentes festos ad tua sacra choros.  
Hactenus insigni cecinit testudine Musa ;  
Aoniasque volans læta revisit aquas.

*Maricæ Garloniæ Grappinæ.*

Propago formosæ arboris  
Formosa Virgo, quæ vagos  
Inter orta Cupidines,  
Veris lilia vincis,  
Rosasque molles, et croci  
Pulchre rubentis igneum  
Florem, et uvidulas comas  
Halantis hyacinthi :  
Redisti avitos ad lares,  
Felicem ocellulis tuis  
Redditura Neapolim,  
Caro adnixa marito :  
Redisti ad optatos choros  
Æqualium, et probos sinus  
Matris, ac bene cognitum  
Fratris dulcis amorem.  
Quis o, quis hunc albo mihi  
Signet diem lapillulo?  
Quis Sabæa calentibus  
Addat munera flammis?  
Vocanda Musarum cohors.  
Huc huc, benigna; et abditam  
Barbiton cape, myrteis  
Frontem wincta coronis,  
Thalia : quid dignum tuo  
Promis favore? quid bonæ  
Voce, vel fridibus student  
Respondere Sororos?  
Sed esse quid lætum, Deæ,  
Hic absque amoribus potest?  
Non movet Chione suis,  
Non me Lyda papillis.

Procul facessant hinc malæ ,  
 Sæcli pudor, libidines,  
 Mi sat est , minuat grave  
 Si Garlonia curas !  
 Juventa , cur me tam cito  
 Ludendo inepta deseris ?  
 Hæc erat facies novis  
 Non fraudanda libellis.

## XLVI.

## A POETICAL FRAGMENT.

26 Nov. 1821.

I know not whether any apology will be admitted for introducing a fragment of Poetry. If it were not to appear in this way, it would probably never see the light : — a loss (it may perhaps be said), too trifling to be counted !

It was written at a moment of fervor, when the power of finishing it was confidently anticipated. — But the clouds of life too frequently recur, to allow a continuation of that, which requires a long sunshine. — There are those, who pretend that the evils of Human Existence fall alike upon all ; or only fall differently, in proportion to want of virtue ; or want of prudence ; — a monstrous opinion, which all the experience of Mankind ; and all the soundest doctrines of Moral Philosophy, disprove ! — If it be so, then benevolence, and charity of heart, and unsuspecting confidence, are crimes. — From these, Misfortune too



commonly springs; on these prosperity seldom smiles. We cannot long withdraw ourselves from the most painful vigilance against wrong and spoliation, without incurring the most frightful consequences of our abstraction.

The World is a field of warfare, in which the needy are incessantly carrying on aggressions against property. It is pleasant to slumber and dream in the visionary groves of Elysium; but like the effects of Wine, it is a momentary delight at the expence of Futurity!

A worldly-minded man may write plausible verses: but was a worldly-minded man ever yet a poet? There are different ages of society, in which worldly cunning, and intrigue, and fraud succeed differently: in the present, they pervade, and prowl, almost without a check! All the barriers which formerly protected generosity, and high-mindedness, are thrown down! Rank, birth, education, intellectuality, go for nothing. Allow the vulgar to be familiar with you; and they are your masters! — not by talent, or knowledge; — but by rudeness: not by polished sharpness, or skill; — but by brute force: they have an audacity and rashness, in proportion to their ignorance and blindness: their own evil intentions guard them against snares; and their freedom from all scruples in the use of means multiplies their weapons of offence!

Begin therefore with what animation I may, I am soon called off to contend *pro aris et focis*! A man, who has the credit of addiction to poetry, is selected as the best prey for the hungry bands of extortion, who are ravaging the world.

The following Fragment therefore must come out with all its imperfections on its head.

## ALPHONSO

## A FRAGMENT.

*Written March 9. 1821.*

## I.

He slept on beds of flowers : his childish form  
 Was such as visits Poets, in a dream  
 Of infant angels, when the Fancy, warm  
 With glories issuing in a radiant stream  
 Of shapes celestial from the fountain pure  
 Of all the Muses, views on orient beam  
 Those rapturous images, that aye endure  
 Above yon star-bright canopy, whose bound  
 Genius and Virtue have the wings to' ensure,  
 Where thousand lyres are struck th' empyreal throne around,  
 And echo all the rolling spheres, in concert with the sound.

## II.

The winds were sighing on his cherub cheeks ;  
 And fann'd the slumbers of his tender frame ;  
 The blood, that thrill'd across in purple streaks,  
 Bespoke the' internal thought that went and came :  
 And feature, limb, and air, and symmetry,  
 Announced some Being, of immortal aim,  
 Whose future deeds would seek the kindred sky ;  
 To live on earth, as with a magic wand,  
 That could with power of force unearthly vie ;  
 Touch each unholy thing with a mysterious hand,  
 And hill, wood, lake and sea, and all that dwell on them,  
 command.

## III.

ALPHONSO was his name : when he from sleep  
 Awoke to tread the woodland walks, and run

Along the meads, and cross the vallies deep,  
And mount the hills to meet the dawning Sun,  
His spirit lighter than the wind, uprose  
To realms of bliss extatic; he begun  
The germs of Heaven already to disclose;  
To fill with airy habitants the scene;  
And as the face of things before him glows  
With every living hue, blue sea, and landscape green,  
To dance about, on airy clouds, the earth and sky between.

## IV.

He listens to the Music of the Night;  
And oft times hears slow-swelling on the gale  
Aërial notes sail by on pinions light;  
Anon with brisker harmony they hail  
His listening ear; and dwell upon the sense;  
And o'er each movement of the soul prevail;  
Till thro' the trembling frame the bliss intense  
Throws off the mortal dross; and, as in air,  
Melting each earthly manacle, from thence  
The loosen'd spirit seems a while on high to bear;  
And e'en in very infancy for joys divine prepare.

## V.

The change of seasons was to him a bliss  
Still varying, ne'er exhausted : the first flower,  
That open'd on the primrose bank, was his :  
The purple violet, when the genial hour  
Drew forth its first perfume, unclosed for him :  
The green leaf swell'd upon the hazle bower;  
The pendant willow-leaf on river's brim  
Hung on its infant verdure; and the vest  
Of emerald bright, that, as the shadows dim

Fled the new-beaming sun , each hill and valley drest ,  
 For him prepared the laughing scene ; for him young Nature  
 blest.

## VI.

When summer's broad effulgence full display'd  
 Creation in her prodigality  
 Of pomp and garniture , for him array'd  
 In all its splendor look'd the golden sky ;  
 For him the woods their grateful umbrage cast ;  
 For him the rippling current murmur'd by ;  
 For him the breath of ripening harvests past ;  
 For him the blaze of vegetation's hues  
 Innumerable glitter'd in profusion vast ;  
 For him yon Ocean's waves their mirror wide diffuse ;  
 For him o'er all the face of earth Heaven life and riches  
 strews.

## XLVII.

## POEMS OF M. A. FLAMINIUS.

*De Laudibus Mantuæ.*

Felix Mantua , civitatum ocelle ,  
 Quam Mars Palladi certat.usque et usque  
 Claram reddere gentibus , probisque  
 Ornare ingeniis virorum , et armis ;  
 Te frugum facilis , potensque rerum  
 Tellus , te celerem facit virente

Qui ripâ , calamisque flexuosas  
Leni flumine Mincius susurrat,  
Et qui te lacus intrat , advenisque  
Dites mercibus invehit carinas.  
Quid palatia culta , quid Deorum  
Templa, quid memorem vias , et urbis  
Moles nubibus arduis propinquas?  
Pax secure loco , quiesque nullis  
Turbata exiliis, frequensque rerum  
Semper copia , et artium bonarum.  
Felix Mantua, centiesque felix,  
Tantis Mantua dotibus beata;  
Sed felix magis , et magis beata,  
Quod his temporibus, rudique sæclo  
Magnum Castaliona protulisti.

---

*Ad Stephanum Saulium.*

Ne tu beatum dixeris, optime  
Sauli, superbo limine civium  
Qui prodit hinc et hinc catervâ  
Nobilium comitante cinctus;  
Non si feracis occupet Africæ  
Quidquid præaltis conditur horreis,  
Gemmasque lucentes, et auri  
Possideat rutilos acervos.  
Nec ille felix, qui valet omnium  
Caussas latentes cernere, sidera  
Notare doctus, et profundas  
Ingenio penetrare terras.  
Sed tu beatum jure vocaveris  
Qui mente purâ rite Deum colit,

Ejusque jussa ducit amplis  
 Divitiis pretiosiora.  
 Non ille vulgi gaudet honoribus ;  
 Sed carus ipsi Numinis est honos ;  
 Pro quo tuendo non recusat  
 Dedecorum genus omne ferre.  
 Quin et relictis cœtibus urbium  
 Mens ejus altum transvolat æthera ,  
 Deique summi , cœlitumque  
 Colloquio fruitur beato.  
 Cælestis ergo jam sapientiæ  
 Plenus , periclis altior omnibus  
 Quiescit in Deo , furentum  
 Despiciens hominum tumultus.  
 Sic præliantes æquore turgido  
 Ventos reducto montis in angulo  
 Miratur , et gaudet procellâ  
 Terribili procul esse pastor.

---

*Ad Donatum Rullum.*

Quis cuncta possit , Rulle , pericula ,  
 Motusque mentis dicere turbidos  
 Qui sævientis instar undæ  
 Nos variis agitant procellis ?  
 Hinc præliatur sollicitus timor ,  
 Hinc spes bonorum credula , gaudium  
 Nunc tollit altè , nunc doloris  
 Dejicimur furibundo ab æstu.  
 Non sic benignus cœlicolum pater  
 Humana finxit corda ; sed insolens  
 Nos fastus ad tumultuosa  
 Hæc freta præcipites adegit :



Cùm vita nultis ante laboribus  
Turbata cunctis afflueret bonis;  
Nec mortis occurrens imago  
Cor trepido quateret tumultu.  
Quod ergo tantis auxilium est malis?  
Ecquid Platonis docta volumina,  
Cultique præceptor Lycæi  
Sollicitam recreare mentem,  
Modumque curis figere tristibus  
Possunt? vel auri perpetuo fluens  
Rivus? vel in sublime tollens  
Per titulos popularis aura?  
Fomenta sunt hæc prorsus inania;  
Luduntque falsa vulgus imagine;  
Vulgique primores acuti  
Viribus ingenii tumentes.  
At tu beatam ducere si cupis  
Vitam, periclis liber ab omnibus  
Adhæreas Deo, piaque  
Mente sacrum venerare numen.  
Hinc hauries veram et sapientiam,  
Verumque honorem, et divitias; ferus  
Quas nec tyrannus, nec tremendi  
Vis rapiat truculenta belli.  
Quidquid bonorum cernitur uspiam,  
Hoc fonte manat: quo sine, quis, licet  
Tetrasque, cælitumque regna  
Possideat, miser usque vivet.

---

*De Joviano Pontano.*

Qui cecinit claro fulgentia lumina cælo  
Pontani doctis versibus Urania,

Phœbe, tuis magnam lucem addidit ignibus, utque  
Nunc melius niteant sidera cuncta, facit.

---

*De Joanne Cotta.*

Si fas cuique sui sensus expromere cordis,  
Hoc equidem dicam, pace, Catulle, tua :  
Est tua Musa quidem dulcissima; Musa videtur  
Ipsa tamen Cottæ dulcior esse mihi.

---

*Ad Balthasarem Castilionem.*

Si truculenta ferox irrumpis in agmina Marte,  
Diceris invicto Castilione satus.  
At molli cithara si condis amabile carmen,  
Castalia natus diceris esse Dea.

---

*Ad eundem.*

Horrida terribilis cum tractas arma, Maronis  
Castilione tui carmine digna facis.  
Idem cum molli vacuus requiescis in umbra  
Castaliæ, æterno digna Marone canis.

---

*Ad Andr. Naugerium.*

Naugeri, ne quis tibus certet, neve labore  
Incassum, laudes æquiparare tuas :  
Sive Epigramma facis juncto pede, sive soluto  
Defles magnanimum funera acerba virum.

*Ad Eundem.*

Quot Bruma creat albicans pruinas ,  
Quot tellus Zephyro soluta flores ,  
Quot spicæ Libycis calent in agris ,  
Quot vindemia porrigit racemos ,  
Quot vastis mare fluctuat procellis ,  
Cum nascens pluvias reportat hædus ,  
Quot Ceraunia frondibus teguntur ,  
Quot cælum facibus micat serenum ;  
Quot sunt millia multa basiorum ,  
Quæ dari sibi postulat Catullus ,  
Quotque sunt atomi Lucretianæ  
Tot menses , bone Naugeri , tot annos  
Vivent aureoli tui libelli.

---

*Ad Actium Sannazarium.*

Quantum Virgilio debebat silva Maroni,  
Et pastor , donec Musa Maronis erit ;  
Tantum pæne tibi debent piscator , et acta ,  
Acti , divino proxime Virgilio.

---

*Gasp. Contareno.*

Contarene , tuo docuisti magne libello ,  
Extinctis animas vivere corporibus.  
Ergo jure tui vivunt monumenta laboris ,  
Et vivent sæclis innumerabilibus.

*Ad Marium Molsam.*

Postera dum numeros dulces mirabitur ætas,  
 Sive, Tibulle, tuos, sive, Petrarcha, tuos :  
 Tu quoque, Molsa, pari semper celebrabere fama;  
 Vel potius titulo duplice major eris.  
 Quidquid enim laudis dedit inclita Musa duobus  
 Vatibus; hoc uni donat habere tibi.

## XLVIII.

*Tragic Tales. Coningsby, and Brokenhurst. By  
 Sir Egerton Brydges, Bar.<sup>t</sup> London, R. Tripp-  
 hook. 2 vol. 8.<sup>o</sup> 1820.*



*Written by a Friend for a Periodical Publication.*

What may have been the success of these Tales, or whether any success at all has attended them, we know not : but we know, that the present taste of the Public is all for glare and extravagance; and that whatever trusts to those forms and colours of composition, which gained the approbation and excited the delight of former ages, has little chance of raising the notice or pleasing the pampered appetite of our own time. That the public mind is in a sound state; and that literature is not rapidly declining into frightful corruption, will scarcely be asserted by any well-informed, pure, and temperate mind.

This false taste is spread though every part of learning,

or authorship; but it prevails most in the department of Fiction. And among its ruling causes may be certainly ascribed the character of modern *Periodical Criticism*; which having become a lucrative trade or profession, has given itself up to follow rather than lead the prejudices and passions of the multitude. Nothing is written in the sober temper of a *Judge*; but every thing with the partiality, the heat, and exaggeration of an *Advocate*.

Truth, moral sagacity, virtuous and amiable sentiment, natural beauty, the movements of the heart, and the unforced visions of the fancy, are the same in all ages and all nations among a civilized people: and if there be a country, which in a late æra of society imagines that it has arisen to a degree of illumination and splendor, which eclipses former lights, and makes the past appear feeble, flat, and insipid, it ought to reverse its own self-conceit and to be taught by the difference, that the violence of its own glare must be factitious and impure.

Milton talks of the « sober certainty of bliss »: there is a sober certainty of knowlege also in classical compositions, which does not first surprize and then satiate, like the forced, hot-bed, high-seasoned dishes of modern composition, which are lashed up into foam; and driven by false effort into cloudy shapes of monstrous chimæros.

No writer has ever long enjoyed fame, who has given himself up to write what was plausible, rather than what was true. The plausible writer may easily be piquant, striking; and, to half-informed readers, amusing, so long as the prevailing prejudices and fashions, which he flatters, continue to rule: but as these subside, the *incredulus odi* soon comes; the charlatanism is detected; and the temporary favourite is cast away for an impostor.

If our knowlege of human nature did not render us familiar with its perpetual inconsistencies both of conduct and

opinion, we should wonder at the contradictoriness of the multitude; who, while they clamour for what is practical, most delight in those freaks of the fancy which are most remote from probability.

If History is Moral Philosophy teaching by example, Poetry and Fable are Moral Philosophy personified by Fancy. If what is personified be not Truth, it is spurious; and it may be added, not the fruit of genuine and solid genius. We do not mean Truth in its narrow sense of *matter of fact*: We extend it to the mental movements; to all those visionary appearances, and internal impulses, which are native to the intellect, and the soul.

There are chords in the human heart, which Genius alone knows how to touch; which are not awakened by what is external; which rise uncalled only in the secret temple, where Genius presides; and which Genius only can direct, so as to arouse them from the sleep which they have no power of their own to shake off. This is not said lightly and unmeaningly: it springs from a doctrine long considered, and maturely digested.

We say that the inventions that do not arise from this source, and are not adapted and directed to excite these chords, are not the inventions of genius. The mind can make technical combinations, like the material hand; but they have no more soul than the cold stone worked into the human form.

Secondary authors mistake particularity and caprice for originality; they think that superiority consists in difference. It is the reverse of this; it is in conformity to what is already in the minds of others, that the merit lies. It is true, that it must go beyond the materials of this *visible* world: it must enter into the world of spirits: it must draw forth intellectual existences: but then it must delineate them in forms and colours congenial to their nature; and



not in the fantastic shapes, which artifice substitutes, for want of admission to their mysteries.

If it be true, ( as it certainly is ), that « *The proper study of mankind is man,* » the highest department of this study, is his intellectual, not his material, nature. Whatever unfolds the scenes and feelings, that exist in those deep recesses; whatever embodies the evanescent figures, that haunt a rich imagination; contributes to the stores of that species of knowledge, which justly ranks among the most sublime and the most useful.

Providence has formed us continually to aspire after something better, than the coarse realities that surround us. The intellectual image associates with the picture of what is external a colouring, which it receives from within. The literary productions, which contribute thus to foster our better natures, and elevate ourselves above the meaner parts of our being, claim and merit a distinguished place.

The niceties of the human character; the conflicts between the good and the bad, of those who mingle opposite qualities of intellect and of virtue; the tendency of particular errations of the mind or of the heart, the charm of those emanations of goodness, which vivid feelings, directed by sublime principles, bring forth, — are subjects worthy of being painted; and worthy the toils of the noblest genius.

This opinion may perhaps seem to lift into a rank, which they have not hitherto held, a large portion of those modern Fictions which go under the name of Novels. But such an inference would not be just. The Novels of the author of *Waverley* may claim this praise to themselves: but there is a force of intellect; a justness of thinking; a skill of composition; a propriety of words; a vividness of feeling and of fancy; in all of which the common manufacture of productions which go under this name is wanting. Their interest lies in the mere excitement of a vulgar curiosity

created by the development of a complicated story. If the reader looks back, he cannot find in them a single passage worthy of being cited, or which can rest on its own merit.

Though that part of the Intellectual faculties, which is called the *Understanding*, or *Reason*, can never constitute genius, yet it may be doubted if a high degree of genius can exist without the addition of a large portion of this quality. We have seen therefore those who have been distinguished for their powers of invention, eminent also in various other walks of literature, and mental power.

We suspect that the author of these Tales may have been blamed for giving any part of the days of his maturer years to this sort of imaginative indulgence. Such censures will have arisen from not making the distinctions we have endeavoured to enforce in the preceding paragraphs.

The contemners of Poetry, and of that portion of prose, which partakes of poetical invention, are men of narrow minds and sterile hearts, who know not what real poetry is: and who mistake for it those abortions, and funguses, and tinsel gew gaws, which pretenders put forth; and the foolish mob eulogise. Such things they may well consider the amusement of foolish and unthinking youth; and light-headed and ignorant age.

The fancy, that is stirred by the heat of youthful blood, is of an earthly and groveling nature. But genuine fancy, the pure and spiritual part of our being, becomes stronger, and glows more brightly with age.

Both the Stories of these Tragic Tales are exceedingly gloomy: and some persons have wondered, under what mood of mind the author could imagine, (if he did imagine), such distressing events; and if he did not imagine them, where he found the outline of such foul murders. —

There are traces about them, as if he had somewhere heard the reality of such things. — *Coningsby* was pronounced by a gentleman of deep consideration, when he perused the Tale, to be a character quite new among the multitudes which Novels have exhibited. Why should it not have arisen from a fancy turning its vision inward upon the operations of a passionate and vigorous mind long brooding in solitude over its own prejudices and violences, and working itself at last into furies, which reason could not controul? It is the business of a true, native, unfactitious fancy, to behold these things in their progress; to have the secrets of the heart opened to it; and to see the future and the distant in the present! —

To copy the human character, as it appears under the disguises of society, is to represent a deceitful surface. The energies that are bred and grow up in solitude within the unseen recesses of the soul, are hid from the observer of daily life: the fancy alone can penetrate them; the mind that creates, only, can develop their movements.

The truth of characters drawn from these sources stands upon a certainty, which no study of external individuality can reach. The represented connection therefore between moral causes and moral effects is more unerring: and the instruction far deeper than the lessons afforded by what are called *portraits* of actual living beings.

If all the world were engaged in providing for the necessities of the day; if all were occupied in promoting their own private interests, the indulgence of fancy would be an obstacle to their purposes, which ought to be sedulously excluded rather than encouraged. But Providence has happily ordered it otherwise: it has left in civilized society no inconsiderable portion independent, and at leisure for intellectual pursuits. For these, whatever is adapted to aid the exercise of the best of our mental powers; whatever

elevates, or refines the thought; whatever assists the connection between language and the shadowy tribes of ideas; whatever seizes those transient impressions of the heart, which come and go so quick, that they allow no leisure to study them, are acquisitions, which the profound philosopher, and generous moralist, will know how to appreciate.

To purge the human heart, and extract from it the first incipient seeds of crime, by holding out a terrific picture of its progress and its consequences, has been promulgated by critics from early ages to be the purpose of Tragedy. *Lord Brokenhurst* is a dreadful Tale: but perhaps it is, notwithstanding, much too short. The wickedness of Lady Brokenhurst has been thought by some to outrage all probability: but when once the furious passions become writhed with obliquity and cunning, and have risen to a certain degree of ascendancy, who shall say where they will stop?

If this character be a picture of female depravity and horror, the author makes amends by his character of *Adeline Coningsby*, who is all purity, and loveliness and spirit;

———— « A faëry vision

Of some gay creature of the element,  
That in the colours of the rainbow lives,  
And plays i' the plighted clouds: »

a creature made to be worshipped; to turn humanity into celestial; to illuminate deserts; and soften the savages of the woods. But a Being so good was not calculated for long happiness here: her sun soon sets in violence, and horror!

The author delights himself with these images of gloom and tempest. He has a melancholy view of life; and evidently clings to sorrow as the congenial inmate of his

hosom. But it cannot be asserted, that sorrow has closed his heart, his curiosity, or his mental activity. Always enquiring, expatiating, analysing, combining, he has never suffered the ills of life to palsy him, nor gigantic disappointments to turn to gall the native glow of his spirit. The enthusiasm, that was his earliest characteristic, remains unabated in his latest writings.

If the Autographical Memoirs, which are said to have been seen by some of his friends, shall ever appear, it will be proved that the accusation of querulousness, a word which implies complaint without adequate cause, has been most unjustly applied to the author. The variety of acts of injustice, to which he has been a victim; the ingratitude, the treachery, and neglects he has experienced, have drawn forth enduring testimonies of his fortitude rather than of his querulousness.

The great difference between an original writer and those who take advantage of the topics of the day to exercise their memories, and apply their ingenuity in specious productions of factitious interest, is well-known to all profound readers. The number of the former class, in any age, is small. Quickness and force of apprehension, power of memory, and facility of language, are not uncommon. But how few are they, who think for themselves? All the rest will live their little day and be forgotten. The borrowed is not at the first moment discriminated from that which originates in the writer's mind: but the difference shews itself with time: the want of vital spirit suffers it to fade. The elasticity of genius cannot be destroyed by misfortune; or enfeebled by neglect.

## XLVIII.

## HALL OF HELLINGSLEY.



The scene of this Tale is laid in one of the Midland Counties approaching towards the West. The time the reign of king James the First. It took its origin from an incident which forms the subject of an actual tradition still prevailing in a certain village regarding a Branch of a noble Family then resident there; and which the Author heard on the spot nearly 40 years ago. What parts are mere invention; and what parts have reference to private history, it would be indelicate and useless to distinguish. The period chosen appears to afford various materials of striking interest. The Characters of that age have been sufficiently elucidated; and are strongly associated in our memories. They do not approach us too near; so as to allow no play to the fancy. Nobility in those days was a distinct race, which, though Philosophy and Liberalism may rejoice in having destroyed it, at least affords splendid or strongly-coloured pictures to the Imagination.

Nothing is intended in this Tale, of minute Manners; of what is called a tact at the little technical outward forms of society; forms which change with every generation; and perhaps two or three times in every generation; so that what thirty years ago was all interest because it caught *« the manners living as they rise, »* now appears tedious, ridiculous, and revolting. With what ennui we now turn from all the tiresome ceremonial, and stiff costume of momentary fashion, with which so large a portion of Richard-



son's endless volumes of *Clarissa* and Sir Charles Grandison is stuffed ; and yet at the time, the greatest proportion of readers thought these things the *great charm of those* works.

The allusion to manners, which two Centuries have left behind, is quite different : whenever traces of *them* remain upon the memory, they remain because they were intrinsically interesting. All that was frivolous, dull, and absurd ; all that had not the sparks of life in it, has long since faded away ; and ceased to leave the speck of an impression.

It is the *Past* that the Poet and the romance-inventor find the expanded field, which they require. If they offend against poetical probability ; the illusion, it is their business to create, is gone. But yet if they do not heighten nature ; if they do not select, nor recombine from what is beautiful or grand, they do not perform the work of genius. The latitude for this probability is better found in the *Past*. Distance softens : Time hallows : we are not willing to allow in our cotemporaries the high traits we can believe in ages, that are gone. There is room also for more curiosity, more novelty, and surprise in a story of other days. We enter it with a spirit more awakened ; our fancy is more active ; and our credulity is more disposed to favour it. It is true, that the purchasers of Tales of Fiction are various ; and ought to be various, that they may be suited to various tastes. Some read that they may have their knowledge of characters of the day sharpened ; that they may improve their skill in the prevailing opinions ; and gaze upon the pictures of the bustle in which they delight to be engaged.

Others desire to have their fancy exercised ; their sentiments exalted ; and the more shadowy faculties of their minds gratified and strengthened.

If attention to what is called practical, is a sort of habit

of mental discipline necessary to those, whose duties call on them to qualify themselves for most of the numerous vocations of daily routine; and whom too refined a sensibility and too abstract sentiments would withdraw from their labours, or disgust with their employments, there are numerous others, to whom the opposite intellectual cultivations are as necessary as they are delightful.

The present NOVEL is (if the author is not mistaken), written on those principles, and in that taste, which actuates a *poetical* Invention; with the selection, the fervor, the picturesque circumstantiality; the enthusiasm, *the believing delusion*, which characterize, or ought to characterise, the fictions of Poets.

## XLIX.

### THE FOUNTAIN OF HELICON.

*Written March 31. 1891.*

Rock'd by the roaring winds to sweet repose,  
 Luxurious slumbers lull'd my weary limbs,  
 Through the long darkness of a winter night!  
 I rose; and open'd to my searching eye  
 The roll of ages past: I mused and saw  
 Visions before me: then I bent my ear;  
 And thought I heard soft voices in the air.  
 Next I revolved the studious page: and thus  
 Day pass'd, like sable night, in inward joy.  
 Hours glided on; and weeks; and rapid months;

And mind began to overcome this frame  
Of mortal clay ; and turn this groveling dross  
Half into spirit : wings uplifted me ;  
And bore me through the clouds. When heaviness  
Sat on my eyes ; and shed Morphean dew ;  
Fancy array'd a brighter world within ;  
And when I waked, I lived as if in dreams.  
The woes of Earth, contrasted with the bliss,  
That shone upon my soul, improved its hues ;  
And made it glow more glorious (1). In the heavens  
The lovely Spring had just began her course ;  
And the young bud disclosed the earliest leaf ;  
And the first tender green had just put forth  
Its emerald mantle o'er the shooting grass :  
When having bask'd beneath the genial beams  
That through the azure canopy above  
Transparent shone, and courted the young Hours,  
( Whose hair with primrose, and with violet  
Circled, threw balmy incense to the breeze ;  
Whose bosoms, like the early opening bud  
In its first swell, threw rapture on my sight ),  
I cast my limbs exhausted on a bank,  
Where the soft radiance melted me to sleep.  
Then seem'd as if a Spirit touch'd my brow ;  
And pierced mine eyelids ; and it said to me,  
« An holy fire has caught thee ! Keep it pure ;  
Nurse it ; and fan it : and it will perchance  
Enoble, and illumine that frail form  
Of earthly substance ; and thy purged eye  
Shall see, what is to mortal view forbid ! »

[1] The hues of bliss more brightly glow,  
Chastised by sabler tints of Woe.

And then a sudden hlaze appear'd to shoot  
 Across the face of this terrestrial globe :  
 And then a momentary striking up  
 Of harps celestial : when the rapture rush'd  
 Through all my veins ; and suddenly I woke !

. . . . .  
 . . . . .

## LX.

## E G O T I S M S.



*Extract of a Letter, July 4<sup>th</sup> 1821.*

It is variety in mental gifts, which can alone lead to enduring distinction in the intellectual world. As we encourage one, or the other, by fits, it takes the temporary mastery, and gives the temporary character to our faculties : whether it be fancy, or sentiment, or reason, or memory.

The same person may therefore at different periods of life exhibit a very different intellectual character.

It is not unreasonable to wish to be fairly estimated, because the power of impressing the opinions we believe to be right, greatly depends on the consideration in which we are held. My vanity has been long cured ; and I have long learned to work with little hope of notice and encouragement ; but it is this sentiment which sometimes makes me endeavour to set myself right ; at least with my friends.

I do this with incessant variety. I feed my mind, it is true, with such infusions as are but of little use except to the

owner, if he has no power but to pour them out just in the same state in which they were poured in. But I hope that I always make use of them for the purpose of new combination; to suggest; to illustrate; to confirm; to expand; to qualify; to distinguish; to generalize; to sharpen and strengthen the faculties; to enrich the imagination; and to ameliorate the heart.

It is easy to be a Book-Maker; and in this sense to be an *Author*. But it is not easy, or common, to produce what is original, forcible, just, profound, important, and eloquent. In this I do not dare hope I have been successful; but to this I have aspired.

At twenty two I produced a volume of Poems, to which I look *back* not with dissatisfaction. If there can be traced in it, not the common place of a ready memory, but the conformity of individual fancy and sentiment to the models of our best schools; especially of the juvenile poems of Milton, I am willing to hope that it may yet last longer, than some of these temporary meteors of whim and glare ».

---

#### AGAIN.

« Sometimes I flatter myself that age has improved rather than lessened my faculties; that it has not only mellowed, but extended my reflections; that it has fortified my knowledge; and given it a firmness and practicability, which it wanted. In those tempestuous six years, which I passed in Parliament, my mind partook of the character of my situation, and of the character of the times. It had flashes of broad light, intermixed with darkness, and bewilderments and mazes. I look back with astonishment and trembling at the fortitude, or the blindness, that could

pass such a period of stupendous trials, and gigantic dangers and sorrows !

On such occasions, it is constant occupation and want of time to reflect, that carries us through : But this very thing is at the same time injurious to just thinking, and a sound state of mind. We have a film before our eyes; and are necessitated to see things in delusive colours ! The truth is too powerful for us ! »

---

## LXI.

## EGOTISMS CONTINUED.



*Extract of another Letter, 15 September 1821.*

« Nature chose to give me a peculiarity of character; to make me the victim of anxieties, about which others care little ; to give me uneasy ambitions, which never can be satisfied; to be constantly grasping perplexities, which neither visit, nor sieze on other minds ! To be beating at the door which opens to the penetralia of the heart, when others skim gaily and lightly over life.

I do not pride myself on this peculiarity of conformation : I regret it ! It is disease; it gives a barbed hook to thoughts, which renders them incapable of being extracted from my brain.

It was no whim, no accident that devoted me to literature. It was the food, on which alone my mind was formed to live : it furnished the only nourishment, with which the seeds, that were sown in my intellect, could be well cultivated !



There are many, who would say, that such a description, if true, will account for the unsuccessful course of my life. Such a person cannot bend to circumstances; cannot keep attention alive to petty expediencies: cannot watch individual interests: but is in search of what is general; of what is wise and just on a large scale: whereas individual advantages are commonly gained at the expence of the general good! While I write these sentences, I again doubt the propriety of stuffing the columns of a letter with them! They have something too *recherche*: too subtle, and remote from the ordinary subjects of interest.

On the other hand, such elucidations, if the occasion that prompts them is lost, die in the mind, and are perhaps never revived again! Every conquered thought, every evanescent distinction, which is fixed by language, is a gain in the fields of Intellect! Original thinkers are so rare, that even among eminent writers, not one in ten, merits this praise ».

---

« I suppose, that in Society every man will be attacked on the side of his tendencies! Mine have always been towards those speculative and visionary habits, which men of the world disapprove so much, and hate so much. I am always therefore bored with hints and praises of what people are pleased to call « *practical sense* » and « *tact of real life* ». Yet many of these folks call themselves severe and scrupulous moralists; and claim also the merit of strict and punctilious religion. But when we come to examine them, in what does this practical sense consist? — In the non-application of their own rules, and principles: in exceptions: in expedients: in freedom from scrupulosity: in taking the rule when it is convenient, and rejecting it, when it is in the way! Then, what is the undeniable inference?

That their principles and professions are all talk, to serve their own purposes : that they have no sincerity ! — If the principles are true, the exceptions are very rare ; and expedients are always dangerous.

If they believe that society can only go on by expedients , let them have the boldness and honesty to say so ! If they believe , that a man is justified and wise in choosing only what is for his own private interest ; and that all sound sense directs such conduct ; let them be *frank* knaves , and declare it ! But lying and hypocrisy for the sake of individual and selfish advantage , is of all profligacies one of the most revolting !

As practical good therefore is so often in opposition to virtue , it appears to me , that this considération alone affords a most powerful encouragement of *intellectual* pleasures. In these alone , after all , must consist the rewards of virtue. — Riches , station , material enjoyments , are not to be gained by it. — It is in the mind alone , in the consciousness within , that the satisfaction must be found. But the mind will not produce fruit , that is not cultivated and prepared for it. The highest talents must be always at work : the lights of the mind are often as transient and changeable , as those of the rainbow. — To catch them distinctly ; and to find language for them , can only be effected by perpetual efforts. — The seeds of the intellect die in the soil , if not perpetually tended , and aided : and foul and noxious plants spring up in their place.

Theoretic Goodness may not always be attended by consistency of conduct : — but in proportion as our principles are right , we shall probably approach Goodness in action ! But what is the worth of his Goodness , whose acts are good ; but whose mind is base and vicious ?

On this account I think all Fictions dangerous , and even positively hurtful , which are formed to give additional

attractions to merely *plausible* characters ; which recommend that *adroitness* in daily conduct, which already more than sufficiently recommends itself. It is the duty, and ought to be constant struggle of the moral Tale-writer, to set in full display all the *Retired* virtues ; all those , in which a man may justly say : « *Mea virtute me involvo* : » in which « the sunshine of the soul » makes amends for the storms , that « darken and growl without ».

## LXII.

*Sir Ralph Willoughby. An Historical Tale. By Sir Egerton Brydges, Bar.<sup>t</sup> Florence 1820, 8.<sup>o</sup>*

This Tale was written at Florence, while confined to a Sofa by illness, in the three first months of 1821. It commences with a reference to the Rebellion of the Earls of Westmoreland and Northumberland, in the reign of Queen Elisabeth. RALPH WILLOUGHBY is the son of an imaginary Nobleman attainted for his concern in that rebellion ; and who having fled abroad , was obliged to educate his infant children there.

Ralph having thus become familiar with the Continental languages , was recommended to the Foreign Department of Lord Burleigh's office ; where having attracted the favour of one of Burleigh's daughters , he raised the jealousy of his fellow-clerks ; and was finally ousted by their intrigues and machinations.

The incidents of his life till the close of the Reign are then related : and this gives an opportunity to introduce

the characters of the most illustrious persons of Elisabeth's Court. The Earls of Oxford; Cumberland; Nottingham; Lord Grey of Wilton; Lord Buckhurst; Lord Hunsdon; Sir Francis Walsingham; Sir John Norris; Sir Walter Raleigh, etc., to whom *Spenser* wrote Dedictory Sonnets prefixed to his *Fairy Queen*, are all introduced, together with the Sonnets themselves.

Then commences, with the Reign of James, that alledged *Plot* known by *Raleigh's* name, which remains an historical mystery to this day.

Here Raleigh, and Cobham, and Lady Arabella Stuart, come into full play. *WILLOUGHBY*, who had been already knighted by K. James in his progress to take possession of the Throne, was now exposed to the manœuvres of Raleigh, for the purpose of procuring him to take a part in the political schemes of Raleigh, whatever they were.

An occasion is then taken to attempt to develop and delineate the secret movements of Raleigh's character. Some friends of the Author have thought this portrait too severe. If it be true, it will excite regret: — but truth must be told at the expence of regret. An author is bound to speak according to the tenor of his own conviction.

Raleigh was a very splendid character; but there are many strong circumstances, on which to ground a suspicion of the goodness of his heart. His daring temper made him not very nice in his feelings; and his boundless ambition overcame a strict regard to means.

*WILLOUGHBY* is represented as regarding Raleigh with admiration mixed with fear and doubt; and as parrying his deep designs with sagacity and brilliant skill: as possessed of Raleigh's talents, without his faults: as sincere, pure; full of fancy, imagination, and sentiment: of an ambition controuled by reason, and cured by disappointment. His passion is solitude, and literature; and the exercise of his inventive genius in poetical composition.

But his solitude, and his innocent and virtuous occupations, do not protect him against the visitations and the schemes of Raleigh, who discovers him in his retreat, and uses every persuasion to draw him again into active life. WILLOUGHBY is superior to these temptations; to these bewilderings and false lights of the mind, to which minor abilities would have been victims, when played off by a man of the splendid powers and deep management so predominant in the tempter. But he was not contented to guard himself alone: his generous spirit resolved to afford a shield to Lady Arabella Stuart, whatever danger might be incurred by it.

When Raleigh left him, he visited this unfortunate Lady, though he was fully aware that it might aggravate the suspicions, which he too well knew were already operating against him. He found her in want of all his advice, and all his consolation. But he paid dear for his generosity, and virtue.

Salisbury, with whom he had been intimate when in the Office of Burleigh the father of this little, crooked, cunning, yet able Minister, had now decided on his destruction, because he would not betray Raleigh, however he might disapprove some part of his conduct.

The full occasion was now given. Lady Arabella, weak, guileless, innocent, was the momentary puppet, whom the State set up to dread. WILLOUGHBY's secret visits were damning proofs of his guilt. Raleigh and Cobham, and Grey of Wilton, were sent to the Tower. Private warnings were sent to WILLOUGHBY of the blow about to be struck on him. Conscious of innocence, he scorned to fly.

The evil hour predicted came. He was sent to prison; brought to trial for high treason in conspiring with Raleigh, Cobham, etc. to put Lady Arabella on the Throne; found guilty on false evidence; and executed.

Here ends the story. And « *cui bono ?* » cry the cold-hearted, the envious, and the malignant? « Why represent your Hero as a man of talents; and give no proof of his talents? Why represent him as unfortunate, and unjustly deprived of reward and distinction, when you have given no proof that he deserved reward and distinction? Is it for the purpose of indulging the querulousness to which you are so much addicted? »

What is thus meant by *proof of talents*, it is difficult to conceive! Is it no proof of talent to have obtained a dominion over the mind of Raleigh? Is it no proof of talent to have written history and poetry, with sagacity, eloquence, and genius? « Oh but this is assertion: not proof! » Happy cavillers, will any thing prevail over your passion to find fault?

Ye amiable and contented Optimists! who think success the proof of merit, and have a calm confidence in the integrity and justice of mankind; who think that the persecuted are always in the wrong; and that malice, jealousy, and self-interest never operate against right; how I admire your scorn and indignation against those, who being the guilty authors of their own distresses and disappointments, dare to vent their bile against the innocent and benevolent world!

*« It is sad (no doubt) to be persecuted with the rage of those, who are victims to their own imprudences! Why not let men quietly enjoy the profit and the credit, which have been awarded to them, in right of the excellent practical common sense, which is really the only talent worth a farthing! We know very well that no one really acts, or talks, or writes, but for his own interest! How then can that be talent, which does not lead to the end sought? »*

« Is not this logic? logic, which cannot be disputed! »

O yes, certainly; if unhappily the question itself were not begged! —



All mankind then are engrossed by SELF! there is no virtue, no sincerity, no conscience, no unmercenary love of literature; no instrinsic love of sublimity or beauty; no unbribed desire of fame, in the world! « What? » says Hudibras;

« What is the value of a thing,  
But as much money, as 'twill bring? »

What is the use therefore of a Poem, or a Romance, that will not fetch money? »

So thinks; and so reasons the mass of vulgar minds.

### LIII.

*Le Forester. A Tale*, 3 vols in-8.<sup>o</sup>, 1802.

This Tale is also by the author of the present Work, who had suffered an interval of seventeen years to pass between the publication of productions of this class.

The Story of this Fiction has an allusion to the celebrated *Anglesey* Case, which occurred before the Middle of the Last Century. Every person acquainted with British Genealogies knows this frightful Tale. Richard Annesley, the last Earl of Anglesey, succeeded his elder brother, 1727, in the Irish Barony of *Altham*, on the supposition of his having died issueless: but many years afterwards, JAMES ANNESLEY claimed the titles and estates (to which the right to an English Earldom had also devolved, in 1737); as legitimate son and heir of Arthur Lord Altham, elder brother of Earl Richard; stating himself to have been kidnapped,

when a boy, by his uncle, and sent a slave to America. Between 1740 and 1750, the question was tried; and a verdict obtained in Ireland, after one of the longest, most laborious, and most curious trials of filiation, that ever occurred before a Jury: a Trial, which fills a printed Folio volume. However the Earl, in possession of titles and estates, still foiled his unhappy nephew by writs of Error, etc., etc., and died without being divested of his usurpations in 1761, — while the claimant wore out his life in obscurity; and died at last without issue male, not long after the same period.

The FICTION of LE FORESTER was suggested by this extraordinary series of Events: but it differs from it in many essential particulars. The Claimant is here finally successful, and recovers his rights. His moral and intellectual character are imaginary; and almost all the incidents are equally so. It was the Father of LE FORESTER, who is here represented as kidnapped; and not the hero himself. The part, in which the author supposes that he has been least unsuccessful, is that which relates the afflicting and cruel circumstances attending this violence to the true heir, by an usurper so near in blood as a father's brother.

The shipwreck on the coast of Madeira; the boyhood and youth passed in the depth of the wooded solitudes of North America; the companions of that solitude; the mode in which he passed his time; and his attachment to the beautiful and innocent partner of his exile—these (it is believed) are written with the greatest flow; and more under the impression of a predominant and believing Imagination than the rest.

As this may be said to be in some degree an *Episode*, it cannot be denied that, to have thrown the greatest interest upon it, is a fault.

So it is : and it is too late to mend it. The truth is , that a large portion of this Part occurred to the author in the progress of the composition , when it was too far advanced to throw it into a less objectionable shape.

Many years have passed since the writer has turned back his eyes on this Work. The impressions therefore , which remain upon him , may be indistinct and inaccurate.

The value of a Plot , which raises the curiosity regarding the succession of events , and increases it as the reader goes forward , cannot be questioned. But if the whole interest consists in the developement of this succession , it ceases when the events are known. The interest therefore derived from sentiment , imagery , and reflection , is more lasting , if not so intense.

In truth , it is of these that the Story ought to be the vehicle. If there be nothing of eloquence , or force , or depth , in these , the production will scarcely repay a second perusal. But it seems as if the generality of Works of this class were content to rely solely on the interest to be raised by novelty or surprize : for the incidents , with which they deal , have as little in them of fidelity and exactness , as they have of beauty or sublimity.

It is sometimes difficult to account for the taste , which a coarse fancy exercises in the selection of its nutriment. It enjoys pictures which are as flat and as rude as reality , yet bear no likeness to it. If delineations have not the merit of likeness , let them have that of fairness , or grandeur. As the taste of the Multitude , if left to itself , always prefers the Dutch School of Painting , so it is most pleased with Fictions , which affect to pourtray the scenes of familiar life. A faithful representation would be both instructive , and in a moderate degree interesting : but that , of which the only merit consists in exactness , is ineffably stupid when it is a bungling invention.

If all the various merits of plot, sentiment, imagination, reflection, and language can be united, no one will doubt the superiority of such a combination. The excitement of a well contrived Plot puts the reader in a state of mind prepared to receive every sentiment and every image with double force.

For this reason it has always appeared to me, that pieces of poetry can no where be introduced with more effect than in a well-contrived Tale. The reader is already worked up into a temperament congenial to the state they require : he has already obtained a familiarity with the character in which they are written, and a sympathy with it.

History and Biography, executed with that attention to facts, which is their essence, cannot have the same wide field for the communication of the highest treasures of the mind.

If these observations are just, the principles which are founded on them, will guide the judgement rightly in deciding on the merit of Tales of Fiction. There must be Invention; but it must be under the controul of sagacity and knowledge of mankind : there must be lively feeling; and a skill in composition; a command of elegant, if not nervous diction.

If thus executed, such a work may be put among the treasures of Moral Philosophy teaching by Example.



## LIV.

*Arthur Fitzalбини. A Novel*, 2 vol. 8.<sup>o</sup> (Oct. 1798),  
2.<sup>e</sup> Edit. (March) 1799.

The *Bibliothèque Britannique*, vol. VI, p. 132,  
has given the following *Critique* on this Novel.



« L'objet principal de l'Auteur de ce Roman paroît être de plaider la cause de la naissance contre la fortune. Il represente l'elevation de sentiment et le dissinterressement parfait, comme l'apanage exclusif des personnes de haut rang. Il voudroit remettre à la mode un prejuge qui a bien vielli en peu d'annees, et que la plus simple observation suffit à detruire.

Rien de moins compliqué que la Fable de Roman. Fitzalбини, jeune homme d'une famille noble et pauvre, à toutes les preventions de la noblesse; il manque l'occasion d'epouser un heretier de la Cité, et s'attache à une Demoiselle de haute naissance, et sans fortune. Celle-ci obtient enfin un heritage considerable, et le mariage s'arrange: mais l'extrême sensibilité de cette jeune personne lui donne une maladie, dont elle meurt.

Ce Roman est evidement sorti d'une plume fort exercé, et si l'on passe les prejuges de son Auteur, on est forcé de lui reconnoître une morale tres pure, et un style tres attachant. » —

The censures on *Birth* contained in this criticism were appropriate to the time and place in which they were published. It was during the domination of the Republican

Faction of the French Revolution. But it is curious that, as far as my observation goes, the Government under which the influence of Birth is more practically operative than in any other, is that of the little Republic of Geneva.

They, who call the respect for Birth a prejudice, and endeavour to turn into ridicule this alledged prejudice, entirely misrepresent the opinions and reasonings of those who favour it. No rational man assumes that Providence assigns native talents or virtues to high descent. He says that the adventitious circumstances attendant on Birth are its better nurses.

But the truth is that Birth can scarcely be said to form the main feature of this Tale. If there be any interest raised by the character of Fitzalbini, it is derived from the energetic qualities of his mind and his heart; from the moral sensibility, which makes him the victim of his unprosperous fortune; from the deep and romantic colours with which his pathetic fancy invests the scenery and incidents, he is destined to.

The clamours raised against the author for certain characters introduced into this Novel, in which a few neighbours imagined that they saw their own portraits, have scarcely yet, at the distance of two and twenty years, subsided. What is the proper licence in drawing portraits for works of Fiction; and how far it is possible for an author entirely to detach from the operations of his fancy the impressions of his experience, are points not easy to be defined.

Of the *imprudence* of any personalities there cannot be a doubt. An author of genius is ill adapted to cope with the vindictive temper of those who are affronted. *His* is a passing arrow thrown out in sport, and forgotten. *They* work in the dark: their revenge never sleeps: and by falsehood, manœuvre, cunning, insinuation, and labour,



they make up for want of talent, knowlege, and weight of character. It is the plodder, that wins the long race; not the swift, or the strong.

All the stupid and the foolish make a common cause, not only when attacked; but when they suspect that they are aimed at.

The First Edition of this Novel was, however, sold in a month. The delay in printing the Second Edition gave time for the public curiosity to cool.

The want of Plot is certainly a defect in this production; which overflows with the sentiments of a wounded and indignant heart.

---

---

## LV.

*Mary de Clifford, a Tale : interspersed with Poetry. London ( Jan. ) 1792.*

---

Nearly seven years had elapsed, since the author had published his SONNETS AND OTHER POEMS, in *March* 1785; when this Novel appeared. He had felt a blight to the ardor of his temper by a reception which seemed to him cold : the visions of his fancy were extinguished in the bud; and, like Collins, he resolved to write poetry no more.

Having amused his broken spirit by studies which required less energy; less of that exhausting temperament in which poetry is formed; having for these seven years whiled away much of his languid time in the plodding pursuits

of a genealogist and antiquarian, a sudden blaze of native visions broke in upon him : the veil that stood before his fancy, was pierced by a reproach; and in a walk of an October morning, ( 1791 ), when the sun made an effort to pierce the congregation of grey vapoury mists that tottally enveloped the scene, there was something of such inspiring and marvellous beauty in the struggle, as to throw back upon the author the poet's mantle, and the poet's heart.

Here, in the instant, he formed the design of *Mary de Clifford*; and on his return to the House, began its composition. The sheets were sent to the Press, as they were written.

He had hitherto studied the model of Milton in his *Sonnets*. A very young writer surely does well to study good models, however original his native powers may be. The effect of this, however, in the present case, was to expose him among the critics to the charge of stiffness of manner. And this was particularly objected to his FIRST SONNET, written in 1782, at the age of 19, in the following words :

## SONNET.

Askest thou, why I court the slighted lyre?

In hopes, thro' life 'twill cheer my steady way,  
 Drawn by no worldly pomps nor cares, astray;  
 And give me passport to the heavenly Quire.

The conscience, pure delight that I inspire;

And for good deeds alone pour forth the lay,  
 No aid, my friend, to lead me calmly gay  
 Thro' ignorance and envy will require.

I strike the strings; and strait my purged ear

Hears not their praise, or blame For, if my song  
 Should, as it breathes, illume the brow of Care;

The sluggard rouse; or bear the Faint along,  
 Shall I for Self alone have labour'd here?  
 O not the plea shall gain my soul heaven's tuneful throng.

---

Another of these pieces was the following :

SONNET,

*Written 30 Nov. 1784.*

This thy last day, dark Month, to me is dear;  
 For this first saw mine infant eyes unbound!  
 Now two-and-twenty years have hasten'd round:  
 Yet from the bud no ripen'd fruits appear!  
 My spirits drooping at the thought to cheer,  
 By my fond friends the jovial bowl is crown'd:  
 Yet sad I sit, mine eyes upon the ground;  
 And scarce refrain to drop the silent tear.  
 Yet, O beloved Muse, if in me glow  
 Ambition for false fame, the thirst abate:  
 Teach me, for fields and flocks, mankind to know;  
 And ope mine eyes to all, that's truly great!  
 To view the world unmask'd on me bestow;  
 And knaves and fools to scorn, howe'er adorn'd by state!

---

There is some satisfaction in recurring to such a test of opinions and principles held at so early an age. Even then I resolved to prefer the study of moral and intellectual associations to those pure descriptions, whether of inanimate or animate nature, which have no sympathy with the movements of the heart or the understanding.

Pope says :

« That not in Fancy's maze he wander'd long;  
 But stoop'd to Truth; and moralised his song. »

The knowledge of the human character, not indeed in its ordinary operations, but in the conflict of energetic passions, is the noblest of all studies.

The delineation of petty manners; the exposure of the little absurdities of temporary fashion, is but a trifling employment of labour, and waste of ingenuity.

The Painter, who pourtrays, by the expression of the countenance and the form, the grander affections of the Soul, is universally acknowledged to be of a far superior rank to him, who draws the familiar and comic scenes of life. Every one is ashamed to own his preference to the latter. It is not so in literary works. The describer of « manners living as they rise » is one, with whom the generality of readers do not hesitate to own their more lively sympathy.

But this is not the proper object of Fiction. « Lord Bacon, » says Blair, « takes notice of our taste for fictitious history, as a proof the greatness and dignity of the human mind. He observes very ingeniously that the objects of this world, and the common traits of affairs which we behold going on in it, do not fill the mind, nor give it entire satisfaction. We seek for something, that shall expand the mind in a greater degree; we seek for more heroic and illustrious deeds; for more diversified and surprizing events; for a more splendid order of things; a more regular and just distribution of rewards and punishments, than what we find here: because we meet not with these in *true* history, we have recourse to *fictitious*. We create worlds according to our fancy, in order to gratify our capacious desires: *Accommodando*, says that great philosopher, *rerum simulachra ad animi desideria, non submitiendo animum rebus, quod ratio facit; et historia* (1).

(1) Accommodating the appearances of things to the desires of the mind; not bringing down the mind, as history and philosophy do, to the course of events ».

Blair concludes this subject thus :

« The trivial performances, which daily appear in public under the title of *Lives*, *Adventures*, and *Histories*, by anonymous authors, if they be often innocent, yet are most commonly insipid; and though in the general it ought to be admitted, that characteristical Novels, formed upon nature and upon life without licentiousness, might furnish an agreeable and useful entertainment to the mind; yet according as these writings have been, for the most part, conducted, it must also be confessed, that they oftener tend to dissipation and idleness, than to any good purpose (1) ».

---

## LVI.

### LITERARY DISTINCTION THE RESULT OF INTRIGUE.



Is there, or is there not, such a thing as intrinsic merit in literary composition? Or does Fame depend almost entirely on intrigue and management?

The answer seems to be, that Fame generally depends on the latter : but that the existence of the first is independent of Fame. — Without the encouragement of Fame, however, Merit very often remains undeveloped. Exercise and labour must be added; or it is stifled in the birth.

At present all literary criticism in Great Britain is re-

(1) Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles-Lettres*, vol. III.

duced to a mechanical system ; and every thing is conducted according to the interests of Factions , Political , Religions , and National.

---

## LVII.

PROSE FICTIONS CLASSED ; WITH  
THEIR USES.

There are a class of ROMANCES , which rest their pretensions to interest on the same sources as those which give a charm to poetry : on those incidents , which are removed from ordinary life ; on force of sentiment ; energy of description ; and depth of colouring : on those incidents upon which a poetical fancy dwells with delight : on persons , whose characters are cast in a mould above the common ; and who have to struggle through life with gigantic calamities and unattainable ambitions.

As the tastes of mankind are various ; so are the purposes for which they take up books of amusement. There are times when we desire to have only the surface of our lightest thoughts gently exercised : there also are times when we would have even the depths of our hearts stirred to the foundation. There are seasons when weak impulses fall upon us like feathers unfelt and unperceived. — When some great grief has taken possession of our bosoms ; when some overwhelming idea sits brooding , and refuses to be removed ; then comes the magic wand of Imagination ; then come the *ardentia verba* , to stir up the incumbent Power ; and frighten her from the abode she has so tyrannically



usurped. As she moves sullenly off, a new train of Ideas rush into their place; and the whole frame feels the animation of its new visitants.

Thus it is that a Tale written in a strain of visionary Invention is often a medicine to a diseased mind. The flat realities of life sometimes slacken the spring, till it becomes totally impotent. The age, in which we live, satiates by mere familiarity. If it be an age in itself tame and monotonous, how much is the effect increased?

With what is called polish, comes sameness and want of force. The manners of two centuries back were in this respect totally different. They had their evils; but they were full of hope, and adventure, and enjoyment. The feudal manners must be admitted to have been full of variety and incident; and to have been peculiarly adapted to a vigorous talent, a vigorous temper; and vigorous frame.

Whether the gay son of an ancient nobleman was worse employed in nightly depredations on the deer of his neighbour's Park, or the *Dandy* who lounges in Bond-Street or at Brooks's, till the still of midnight comes, when he may carry off his neighbour's wife; may be a question of morals left to be discussed by others!

But there is this advantage at least in the former, that it is a better subject for description: that the very novelty prevents its palling upon the senses, like the other; and that the bold perils, the hair-headed scapes, call forth a sympathy allied to virtue.

It is true that a set of incidents whose main recommendation is novelty, and which evaporate in a momentary exercise of the fancy, are too transient in their effects, to be of much value.

But an author, practiced, for a life of nearly sixty years, in literary composition, can scarcely fail to make such incidents the channels of a thousand thoughts and senti-

ments, which have been long revolving in his mind; of deeply-digested inferences; of axioms worked into form and language: of imagery hitherto floating in the mind for want of a place to rest upon.

The mere invention of a succession of incidents seems to be a very common faculty, as is sufficiently proved by the abundant trash of a circulating library. But in these not a single sentence detached from the story is of the smallest value. It is in the writings of persons of genius long exercised in authorship, that we must look for the sterling ore, losing little of its worth when decomposed and detached.

If the whole of human life were to be passed in the fever of society, or the practical cunning of business, it might be questioned whether the productions, which mainly exercise the more abstract qualities of the mind, had not a tendency to inflame susceptibilities, which had better be extinguished. But it is not so: unbroken solitude is the fate of many: and solitude must sometimes happen to all. Then it is that we require the consolation of Books: the weary hours of vacancy require to be peopled by the images of the mind.

There is no fear that the duly qualified competitors for the honour of this occupation will overflow. No single genius, however inexhaustible, is sufficient for this purpose.

We know in Painting the value of an Imagination, which deals in new combinations: we acknowledge it by the glow of the eye; and the sensation it conveys thro' the frame. A similar effect is still more strongly produced by a new literary Fiction, issuing from a vigorous and exercised pen.

## LVIII.

EPITAPH, IN THE CHURCH OF WOOTTON,  
IN KENT.

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF  
JEMIMA, *relict of* EDWARD BRYDGES

*Of Wootton Court, Esq.<sup>r</sup>*

*Whom she survived nine and twenty years ,  
And dying December 14.<sup>th</sup> 1819 , aged 81 ,  
Was buried in the Family Vault in this Church.*

*She was of illustrious Birth ,*

*Being youngest Daughter , and Coheiress .*

*Of William Egerton L. L. D. Prebendary of Canterbury ,  
Rector of Penshurst , and Chancellor of Hereford ,*

*Who was one of the sons of*

*The Honourable Thomas Egerton of Tatton Park in Cheshire ,  
A younger son of JOHN 2<sup>d</sup> EARL OF BRIDGEWATER ,*

*By LADY ELISABETH CAVENDISH , Daughter of*

*WILLIAM DUKE OF NEWCASTLE.*

*An Example of conjugal fidelity ,*

*And domestic virtues ,*

*She passed the most important portion*

*Of her life*

*In the adjoining Mansion ;*

*Where the elegance of her manners ,*

*The attractions of her Person ,*

*And the Kindness of her Conduct ,*

*Secured her the respect of the High ,*

*And the veneration of the Poor.*  
*Of strong talents, and cultivated mind,*  
*She lived and died in the mingled awe,*  
*And Comfort of the Christian Faith.*  
*If age at length enfeebled her frame,*  
*The cares of a numerous Family*  
*Struggling with the storms of the world,*  
*Neither extinguished her Cheerfulness,*  
*Nor her love of society.*  
*Keenly alive to praise,*  
*She repaid attentions with the warmest gratitude,*  
*And sunk into the grave surrounded*  
*By those, whose respect and kindness*  
*Were most delightful to her.*

---

*Sacred also to the Memory of*  
 EDWARD TYMEWELL BRYDGES of Wootton Court, A. M.  
*Also Rector and Patron of Otterden,*  
*And of this Parish; (Eldest son the said Jemima*  
*By the said Edward),*  
*Who died at this seat,*  
 Oct. 17. 1807, aged 58.  
*He died respected by his neighbours,*  
*And beloved and deeply lamented*  
*By his Parishioners.*  
*With Feelings too acute*  
*For the common concerns of Life,*  
*He possessed a Philanthropy,*  
*Which glowed with delight at*  
*All the refined pleasures of Society.*  
*A mild eloquence,*  
*Combined with a melodious voice,*  
*Gave a charm to his Oratory*

*Which could rarely be excelled ;  
 And numerous were the Friends  
 Whom the attractions of his manners ,  
 And the suavity of his Disposition  
 Procured and rivetted*

---

*The Cares of Life , and  
 The protracted Litigation of his Claim  
 To the ancient Barony of Chandos ,  
 Which wasted so many years  
 Of his existence ,  
 Were at length  
 Too much  
 For a delicate Constitution ;  
 And he sank into the grave  
 Before his Mother ,  
 After a severe Illness of four years ,  
 Which he bore  
 With the most patient fortitude.*

---

*He left no surviving Issue  
 By his Wife CAROLINE ,  
 Daughter of RICHARD FAIRFIELD , Esq.<sup>r</sup>  
 Of Streatham in Surry ,  
 Who joins his two surviving Brothers  
 SIR ECERTON BRYDGES K. J.  
 And  
 J. W. H. BRYDGES Esq.<sup>r</sup>  
 In erecting this Monument.*

## LVIII.

## CENOTAPH.

( *Intended for a Tablet in Wootton Church.* )



*In memory of  
John Brydges of Wootton Court  
In the county of Kent ,  
Esquire ;  
And of Gray's Inn, Barrister at Law.  
Who died in the month of July  
1712 ,  
At the early age of 31 years ,  
And 9 monihs :  
And lies buried in the  
Parish Church of St. Alphage  
In Canterbury.  
He was taken off  
By a rapid fever , in the midst  
Of high hopes , and ardent endeavours  
To restore ,  
By talent and labour  
In the exercise of an  
Honourable Profession ,  
The waning branch of  
His ancient Family  
To its pristine lustre.  
He was born in  
Oct. 1680 ;*



*And after a liberal education*  
*At Oxford,*  
*Though inheriting a competent*  
*Landed patrimony,*  
*Applied himself to the study*  
*Of the Laws of his Country,*  
*As a path of just advancement*  
*And solid distinction.*

*But the prospects of Man are vain;*  
*And the fire of his expectations*  
*Was the flame in which he died !*  
*He left three infant children,*  
*A daughter DEBORAH;*  
*A son JOHN, aged two years ;*  
*And a second son EDWARD,*  
*Aged six months ;*  
*( Yet insensible of their loss ),*  
*By his wife JANE,*  
*Only surviving daughter and heir*  
*Of EDWARD GIBBON, Esq.<sup>r</sup>*  
*Of Westcliffe, near Dover,*  
*By MARTHA, daughter of*  
*Sir JOHN ROBERTS, of Bekesborne, K.<sup>t</sup>*  
*Who survived him till*  
1738 ;  
*And lies buried in the*  
*Same Church ;*  
*Together with*  
*Her grandfather Sir John Roberts,*  
*Who died in 1658 ;*  
*And her grandmother Dame Jane Roberts,*  
*Who was daughter of*  
*Simon Bunce of Throwleigh,*

*By a daughter of  
Arthur Barham , Esq.<sup>r</sup>  
Son of Sir Nicolas Barham ,  
Serjeant at Law in the reign of  
Queen Elisabeth.*

---

*In Memory also  
Of the above-named  
Jane Brydges , Widow ,  
Daughter of Edward Gibbon , Esq.<sup>r</sup>  
Who was eldest son of Thomas Gibbon  
Of Westcliffe Esq.<sup>r</sup> by his second wife Alice Taylor,  
Sister of the half-blood to Jane ,  
Wife of Sir John Maynard ,  
One of the most eminent Lawyers of his age ,  
In right of which alliance  
The said Jane Brydges derived  
A valuable landed property  
From the will of the said Dame Jane Maynard.  
Which Jane Brydges also  
By her paternal aunt, Anne wife  
Of John Coppin of Wootton , Esq.<sup>r</sup>  
( Whose only son John Coppin  
Died without issue in 1703 ),  
Finally brought that Seat and  
Estate to her husband , and  
His posterity.*

---

*In grateful recollection  
Of these Benefits  
Still enjoyed ;*

*And as a record of this line  
Of inheritance ,  
This Tablet is thus  
Inscribed.*

---

## LIX.

## CENOTAPH

FOR

THE CHURCH OF ICKHAM, IN KENT.



*Sacred to the memory  
Of  
Thomas Barrett of Lee in the  
Parish of Ickham, in the  
County of Kent, Esq.<sup>r</sup>  
Who died in the month of January ,  
1803, aged 59,  
He was only son of Thomas Barrett ,  
Of the same place, Esq.<sup>r</sup>  
Who died in 1758 ;  
By his fourth wife, the daughter and heir  
Of Humphry Pudnor, Esq.<sup>r</sup> by  
A daughter and coheir of Sir William Willys, Bar.<sup>t</sup>  
His great grandfather was  
Sir Paul Barrett, of the Same Place, K.<sup>t</sup>  
Serjeant at Law; Recorder of Canterbury,  
And Member of Parliament for New Romney,  
In the reign of K. Charles II.*

*The said Thomas Barrett died unmarried.*

*His moral character was*

*Amiable and correct.*

*He was distinguished by*

*A cultivated understanding ,*

*An exquisite taste , and*

*The highest polish of manners.*

*He adorned his seat at Lee at a vast expence,*

*To the advancement of the Arts ,*

*And the admiration of all , who are*

*Skilled in Architecture , or Painting.*

*He sat a short time in Parliament*

*For Dover :*

*But was better fitted for the*

*Quiet splendor of private life ,*

*Than the turmoils of public business*

*He left his estate and his uame*

*To his great nephew,*

*Thomas , grandson of his only sister ,*

*Eldest son of Sir Egerton Brydges , Bar.<sup>t</sup>*

*Now a Captain in his*

*Majesty's Grenadier Reg.<sup>t</sup>*

*Of Guards.*



## LX.

## CENOTAPH

FOR

THE CHURCH OF MONK'S HORTON IN KENT.



*This Tablet is inscribed*

*As a memorial of*

*The REV. WILLIAM ROBINSON, A. M.*

*Rector of Burfield in Berkshire,*

*And formerly also Rector of Denton,*

*In the county of Kent;*

*Who died in Dec. 1803, aged (circ.) 76.*

*He was one of the younger*

*Sons of MATTHEW ROBINSON of this*

*Parish of Horton, Esq.<sup>r</sup> by Elisabeth*

*Heiress of the Family of Morris,*

*Whose mother remarried the learned Conyers Middleton, DD.*

*And the said Matthew was*

*Grandson of Sir Leonard Robinson, K.<sup>t</sup>*

*One of the sons of Thomas Robinson,*

*Of Rokeby, in the County of York, Esq.<sup>r</sup>*

*By his marriage, in (1621) with*

*Frances daughter of Leonard Smelt of*

*Kirby-Fletham, Esq.<sup>r</sup> by ... Allanson.*

*The said WILLIAM ROBINSON*

*Was a good and ripe scholar;*

*A man of highly cultivated taste; and*

*Superior native talent.*

*He was the friend and companion  
Of men of genius ;  
And especially intimate with the poet Gray.  
He had two sisters distinguished for literature ,  
Of whom Elizabeth , widow of Edward Montagu , Esq.<sup>r</sup>  
Is celebrated for her Essay on Shakespeare ;  
And her Epistolary genius.*

---

*In Nov. 1800, by the death of his  
Elder brother , MATTHEW , 2.d LORD ROKEBY  
He succeeded by devise to a portion  
Of his estates in Kent, Yorkshire ;  
Durham , and Cambridgeshire,  
And to a large personal property.*

---

*He left one son ,  
And two daughters , his  
Survivors.*

---

## LXI.

## INSCRIPTION

FOR

THE CHURCH OF WESTCLIFFE , NEAR DOVER.

---

*SACRED to the Memory  
Of THOMAS GIBBON of WESTCLIFFE , Esq.<sup>r</sup>  
Who died 1674 ;*



*Aged 80 years and upwards.*  
*By his first wife Dorothy Best,*  
*Daughter of Thomas Best of Allington, Esq.<sup>r</sup>*  
*He left issue his eldest son,*  
*Thomas Gibbon of Westcliffe, Esq.<sup>r</sup>*  
*Who married Mary sister of Sir William Rooke,*  
*Of Monk's Horton, K.<sup>t</sup> and other issue.*  
*By his second wife, Alice Taylor,*  
*He left issue Edward Gibbon, Esq.<sup>r</sup>*  
*Who married Martha daughter of Sir John Roberts, K.<sup>t</sup>*  
*And also*  
*Matthew Gibbon of London, Marchant, who*  
*Had issue Edward, born in 1666, afterwards*  
*A Commissioner of the Customs in the Reign of Q. Anne;*  
*Thomas, Dean of Carlisle;*  
*And Elizabeth, wife of Sir Whitmore Acton, Bar.<sup>t</sup>*  
*(Besides other issue.)*  
*The said THOMAS GIBBON, the elder,*  
*Was Lord of the Manor, and Patron of the Advowson,*  
*Of Kingston, near Canterbury,*  
*Which he settled on his second son,*  
*Richard Gibbon, M. D.*

---

## LXII.

## INSCRIPTION

FOR

THE SAME CHURCH.



*In memory of*  
*EDWARD GIBBON Esquire*

*Who by his first wife Martha ,  
 Daughter of Sir John Roberts , K.<sup>t</sup>  
 Left issue JANE , his only daughter and heir.*

*He married secondly  
 His cousin ELIZABETH GIBBON ,  
 Daughter of Richard Gibbon ,  
 By whom he had an only son ,  
 Who died in his youth.*

---

*In memory also of  
 The said ELIZABETH GIBBON  
 Who surviving the said Edward ,  
 Remarried M. Philip Yorke ,  
 By whom she had PHILIP YORKE , born 1690 ,  
 Afterwards Earl of Hardwicke ,  
 And Lord High Chancellor of England.*

---

## LXIII.

### INSCRIPTION

FOR

THE CHURCH OF ICKHAM , IN KENT.

---

*In memory of  
 DAME SARAH , widow of SIR PAUL BARRETT , K.<sup>t</sup>  
 She was daughter of  
 SIR GEORGE ENT , K.<sup>t</sup> M. D.  
 President of the College of Physicians ,  
 And one of the most learned and eminent Physicians  
 Of the reign of K. Charles II.*

*Who died 13 Oct. 1689, aged 86.  
 The said Sarah was first married to  
 Francis Head, son and heir apparent of  
 Sir Richard Head, Bar.<sup>t</sup>  
 ( By whom she had issue Sir Francis Head, 2d Bar.<sup>t</sup> )  
 Surviving her second Husband many years,  
 The said Dame Sarah died at her seat in this parish;  
 And was buried in the family vault  
 In this Church.*

---

## LXIV.

## INSCRIPTION

FOR

THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF CHESTER.



*Sacred to his glorious memory  
 Of Sir William Mainwaring, K.<sup>t</sup>  
 Who died in the cause of Loyalty,  
 Gallantly fighting for his Sovereign K. Charles I.  
 On the walls of Chester 1643.  
 He was son of Edmund Mainwaring, LL. D.  
 A younger son of Sir Randal Mainwaring of Pever,  
 in Cheshire,  
 One of the families of the most indubitable antiquity  
 Of the very ancient Gentry of this County.  
 He fell in the prime of youth;  
 In the midst of love, respect, and admiration,  
 The result of every personal accomplishment,  
 And virtue.*

*He married Hesther daughter and Heir of  
Christopher Wase, Esq.<sup>r</sup> of Upper Holloway, in Middlesex;  
By whom he left two daughters,  
His coheirs;  
Hesther, afterwards married to  
Sir John Busby, of Addington, Co. Bucks, K.<sup>t</sup>  
And ... married to Sir Thomas Howe, K.<sup>t</sup>*

---

## LXV.

## INSCRIPTION

FOR

THE CHURCH OF RIDGE, IN HERTFORDSHIRE.

*This Tablet*

*Records the memory of  
Hesther, wife of Sir Henry Pope Blount,  
Of Tittenhanger, K.<sup>t</sup>  
Widow of Sir William Mainwaring, K.<sup>t</sup>  
And daughter and heir of Christopher Wase, Esq.<sup>r</sup>  
By her first husband she had two daughters  
Lady Busby, and Lady Howe.  
By her second husband Sir Henry Pope Blount,  
Who has rendered his name famous by his  
Ingenious voyage to the Levant,  
She had issue Sir Thomas Pope Blount of Tittenhanger, Bar.<sup>t</sup>  
Celebrated for his learned Writings;  
Also Charles Blount, Esq.<sup>r</sup> etc.*

## LXVI.

## INSCRIPTION

FOR

THE CHURCH OF GREAT GADDESSEN,  
IN HERTFORDSHIRE.



*Sacred to the memory of*  
*Hesther, widow of the Honourable Thomas Egerton,*  
*Of Tatton Park, in Cheshire,*  
*Daughter of Sir John Busby of Addington Co. Bucks, K.<sup>t</sup>*  
*By Hesther daughter and coheir of*  
*Sir William Mainwaring, K.<sup>t</sup>*  
*She died* 1724;  
*Having survived, for nearly forty years,*  
*Her Husband, who was taken off in the flower of his youth,*  
*And lies buried here,*  
*In the Family Vault of the Earls of Bridgewater.*  
*She left her surviving son, William Egerton, LL.D.*  
*Rector of Penshurst (1), in Kent, etc.*  
*Her Executor (2).*

[1] He lies buried in the church of Penshurst, 1737, which parish his daughter JEMIMA was born in Sept. 1728. His widow, Anne daughter of Sir Francis Head, Bar.<sup>t</sup> was also buried there, 1778.

[2] *The dates of these Inscriptions having been filled up by memory, the Antiquary is requested to make allowances for any trifling inaccuracy.*

*Geneva, Jan. 17. 1822.*

## LXVII.

ON THE MEMOIRS OF EDWARD GIBBON ,  
THE HISTORIAN. WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

The INSCRIPTIONS , which have preceeded the present Article , suggest to me the opportunity of saying something on the commencement of M.<sup>r</sup> GIBBON'S MEMOIRS. The Historian has made some apology for that interest regarding the history of our ancestors , which seems implanted in our nature. I remember that *Bishop Watson* , a severe , dry , analytical reasoner , without a spark of fancy or sentiment , begins his *Own Life* with a similar apology. We have the same feelings expressed in the writings of Great Men from the earliest ages.

This is also fully admitted by one , whose own illustrious merits rendered it totally unnecessary to his importance to resort to reflected and ( what are called ) adventitious honours. The immortal SULLY thus speaks of his descent , and alliances.

« Comme c'est » ( says he , ) « l'histoire de ma vie jointe a celle du Prince que j'ai servi , qui va faire le sujet de ces Memoires , je dois donner un eclaircissement sur ma famille et sur ma personne. En satisfaisant la curiosité du public à cet égard , je le fais sans affectation et sans vanité , et que je donne a la seule necessité de dire la vérité tout ce qu'on pourra rencontrer d'avantageux pour moi ici et dans toute la suite de ces Memoires.

« MAXIMILIEN est mon nom de Baptême , et BETHUNE est celui de ma famille. Elle tire son origine par la maison de Coucy , de l'ancienne maison d'Autriche , etc. »



« La maison de BETHUNE qui a donné son nom a une ville de Flandre , » *etc.* , « furent déclarés protecteurs de la province d'Artois , *etc.* »

« Elle s'allia avec presque toutes les maisons souveraines de l'Europe , *etc.* (1).

« Quand on a de pareilles exemples domestiques , on ne sauroit les rappeler trop souvent pour s'animer à les suivre. Heureux ! si pendant toute ma vie j'ai pu me comporter de manière que tant d'hommes illustres ne dedaignent pas de me reconnoître , et que je ne rougisse pas moi-même d'en être descendu , » *etc.*

« Mais je dois aussi avouer que la Branche dont je suis sorti avoit alors beaucoup perdu de sa première splendeur. Cette Branche est issue d'un simple cadet , et le moins riche de tous ceux qui ont porté ce nom. La Branche aînée étant tombée trois fois en querouille , tous les grands biens qu'elle possédoit dans différens endroits de l'Europe , ne passèrent point aux collatéraux , mais furent portés par les filles dans les maisons Royales ou elles entrèrent. Mes ancêtres particuliers ne laisserent pas , en se mariant avantageusement , de redonner à leur Branche ce que leur manquoit pour soutenir dignement son nom : mais toutes ces richesses furent presqu'entièrement dissipées par le mauvais ménage et la prodigalité de mon grand-père , qui ne laissa a son fils qui est mon père que le bien d'ANNE DE MELUN sa femme , qu'il ne pouvoit pas lui ôter , » *etc.* (2).

[1] « Par les maisons de Chatillon , *etc.* , elle comptoit , dit Du Chesne , plus de dix Princes du Sang Royal de France , et tous les Souverains de l'Europe.

[2] See *Histoire Genealogique des Maisons de Chatillon , Montmorency et Laval , Vergy , Guignes , Ardres , Gand et Coucy , Dreux , Bar-le-Duc , Luxembourg et Limbourg , du Plessis de Richelieu , de Broyes et Chateau-Villain , de Chastenières et de Bethune* , par And. Du Chesne. Paris 1629-1639 , 7 vol. fol.

Unquestionably the descent of SULLY was very different from that of WATSON or GIBBON. But it is worth observing, what is the effect of great PERSONAL superiority and merit! GIBBON has given a lustre and extension to his name in Europe, which centuries of the highest rank and greatest possessions cannot give. Great Nobles, inheriting splendid honours from a long succession of ancestors, may command respect and veneration in their own country : but a Foreign People will feel no interest about them ; nor perhaps even recognize their existence.

It may be asked, what there was in GIBBON, of such extraordinary preeminence as to command this effect? It cannot be ascribed to superiority of high and positive genius : for this quality cannot be justly said to have been his characteristic. It may rather be attributed to complex causes. We may therefore notice,

1. The magnitude and universal interest of the subject of his Great *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.

2. The vast extent of research and erudition, with which he has treated his subject.

3. The method and clearness of his arrangement ; and the digested and finished manner, in which he has decomposed, and rebuilt the whole.

4. A spirit of elegant and philosophical criticism, with which he examines, selects, and judges.

5. A freedom of opinion ; and the interest, created by the novelty of disputing commonly received principles and facts.

6. A style, which, if neither pure, nor splendid, is yet glittering and full of point.

7. A talent and skill of compression, and due and proportionate distribution, which cannot be too much praised.

8. An uniformity of contexture ; and total freedom from

all patches and borrowings, and insertion of unassorted materials, from which scarcely any other long History is free.

These characteristics might be multiplied by others of a similar kind. But these alone may probably be deemed sufficient for the effect, for which they are stated to account.

If we reflect, how comparatively narrow are the subjects embraced by most other celebrated Historians, the superiority of GIBBON in this respect alone gives him the most decided preeminence. Can we wonder then at the distinction he enjoys, when all the other attractions I have named, are added to it? The learned and the curious of all Nations must feel an equal interest in this Work. And as it always contains an economy of thought and matter, and a calmness and good humour of discussion, which neither wastes the spirits, nor harasses the attention, it conciliates all humours and prejudices; and seems made for the Universe; and not for one time or country. But an Hypercritic might yet find many serious, and perhaps predominant defects in this History.

It has rather the distinction of an immense edifice striking from the vast number of its parts, or apartments, all of one plan and one measure, than from the grandeur and variety of its design and execution. It betrays more of polish and artifice, than of native force.

The impressions of the Historian were clear, and retentive; and he has his recollections constantly alive: but he wants original and intrinsic energies: all with him seems to be the acquisition of study. There is in him therefore nothing which astonishes by its profundity, or its acuteness; nothing which bears away by bursts of overwhelming eloquence.

It is perhaps the author's sedateness of temper; his ba-

lancing, considering mind, which has secured the due apportionment of his materials, and the taste of his selections : but we meet with no discoveries ; we are cheered by no flashes of light : we are wearied with monotony ; and persevere, rather as a task, than as a pleasure. It requires the Historian's phlegm, to read him with due interest ; and the Historian's practised memory, and ambition of recondite, knowledge to give an impulse which will not flag in the labour of the perusal.

His love of precision ; his critical curiosity ; his easy and unruffled apprehension ; his even-paced exertion of strength, carried him on from day to day, and year to year, with an unebbing hope that he should arrive at the distant goal : like the sand of the hour-glass, all went quietly through the sieve of his mind ; broke itself, in due and unconflicting order, into atoms ; and was ready to be replaced and amalgamated into one even texture, in which there were no masses ; nor any ill-sorted combinations.

*Hume* is equally free from prolixity and inequality ; and *Hume's* style is far more easy and transparent : but *Hume* was not equally encumbered with research : the period of his Work was comparatively short and circumscribed ; and the materials, which he used, lay upon the surface. He did not trouble himself with the digest of voluminous libraries of rare, dry, difficult, and barbarous learning : but he seised on facts which were easily within every one's reach ; and throwing on them the sunshine of a lucid, acute, rapid, and highly-cultivated mind, depended on the charm of the manner, and the adornment of the genial beams of intellect which, a genius already stored with extraneous riches threw upon it !

*Robertson* was a philosopher, and an antiquary, as well as an accomplished and sagacious Historian. His investigations were profound, laborious, and enlightened ; and he

appears to have searched for truth with an integrity, which will ensure the duration of his Works. The subjects he chose were highly important : but still they cannot be put in competition with the universality of interest inherent in the subject of GIBBON. The erudition they required , is immeasurably less extensive; and the concentration of mind , which they permitted , rendered depth and force more attainable.

But there is something of monotony also attributable to *Robertson* : his style is artificial ; and approaches to the dry, and hard : he has no eloquence ; and, I think , no fancy.

If we were to draw the possible, rather than what the world has hitherto seen , we might invent an Historian with the imagination of a Poet , yet with the fidelity of an Annalist ! Imagination might light him to the most secret recesses of the temple of Truth ; and discover to him what profound learning and laborious enquiry never yet reached ! But such prodigies we have not hitherto been allowed to witness. The Imagination is too apt to draw what it wishes : — not what has actually been !

If then in fact GIBBON has produced a work , which altogether is not likely to be paralleled , what is the effect of the lustre , which it gives to his name ? Can it throw back a splendor upon his ancestors ? Can it confer any honour on the collaterals of his blood ? It will be difficult to persuade the Public, in these days of what is called glorious emancipation from prejudice, that the character, rank , habits , and adventitious circumstances of a man's family , have any concern with his own personal intellectual gifts , acquirements , and productions. But if Addison be right , we never read a Book with interest , without wishing to know the history of its Author.

M.<sup>r</sup> GIBBON has himself attempted to give a narration of

his Descent : and it is a little singular, that he has totally mistaken the upper part of it, as far as regards the Branch, whence he sprung. There is in the world so much stupid scepticism about pedigrees, ( caused, no doubt, by the charlatanism, which is often displayed on this subject ), that many will receive with hesitation from me this correction of the Historian himself. But what I have to say is no more a matter of doubt, than *who* was the Historian's *father*? It regards the *birth* of his *great-grand-father* MATTHEW; and the identity of *Matthew's father and mother*! That this *Matthew* was not of the *Rolvenden* Branch; but a younger son of *Thomas Gibbon*, Esq.<sup>r</sup> of *Westcliffe*, by *Alice Taylor*, his *second* wife, the deeds, wills, letters, and property in my possession prove beyond all possibility of controversy. I corresponded with M.<sup>r</sup> Gibbon on the subject in the autumn before his death, ( 1793 ); and convinced him of his error : but it was too late to give him the opportunity of setting this part of his Memoir right.

M.<sup>r</sup> GIBBON was the *seventh* in descent from THOMAS GIBBON, who bought the Lordship and seat of *Westcliffe*, ( a small parish between Dover and Deal ), from Thomas Lord Borough about 1590. The head Branch of the family had been settled for some centuries at Rolvenden in the *Weald* of Kent, as is recorded by *Philipot*, on decisive authority, in his *Villare Cantianum* published about 1650. The same antiquary asserts in direct terms that the *Gibbons of Westcliffe* were a Branch of this Family. After a great deal of pains, I confess that I have not been able to discover when they branched off; nor the mode in which they ought to be joined together. But the evidence of a celebrated Antiquary and Genealogist, nearly two hundred years ago, printed at the time it was written, is surely sufficient authority for such a fact. I may add, that the materials of the *Villare* were collected by Philipot's father,



who was an *Herald*, and Kentish man : and eminent in his profession.

The Branches of this House varied the *field* of their *Arms*. Those of *Rolvenden* bore it *blue* : those of *Bishopsbourne*, *WESTCLIFFE*, etc., changed it to *Sable* (1). The rank, which a Family holds, may be known from its alliances, with a precision that seldom errs. The sphere therefore in which the *Gibbons of Westcliffe* moved, from the close of the reign of Q. Elizabeth to the close of that of K. Charles II, may be easily and clearly ascertained. It cannot be pretended that the rank of a country gentleman

(1) There is some difficulty as to the Branches, to whom this variation was assigned. A patent or Grant exists, assigning it to those of *Frid* in *Bethersden*, whence came those of *Charlton* in *Bishopsbourne*. Those of *Westcliffe* bore it exactly the same : whence it may be inferred, that they were of the *Bethersden* Branch. Their *positive usage* of this *particular* variation, from the commencement of the reign of K. Charles I. may be proved by many seals, paintings, and hatchments, yet existing. And this gives me an opportunity of mentioning what is worth the notice of Kentish Genealogists. The Last *Visitation of Kent* by the Heralds was made by *Sir Edward Bysshe* in 1663. It is a very slight and careless one : and this can excite no surprize in those, who consult the character of *Sir Edward* given by *Anthony Wood*. In the volume, in which the pedigrees are entered, a Blank is left for the arms of no inconsiderable number of the Families recorded. A few years ago the original Note Book of the Clerk, who accompanied *Sir Edward* in this *Visitation*, was recovered from the sale of M.<sup>r</sup> Brand's Library. Most of these arms are there preserved ; but were afterwards omitted to be copied fair into the Office-Book. A late Herald, no incompetent judge on such a subject, and not inclined to the side of candour, considered them to be thus so authenticated, that he proposed to append them to the *Visitation*. But *higher authority prevailed !!*

Among these arms were recorded those of *Gibbon of Westcliffe*, in the form already mentioned.

possesses a lustre, which creates a general interest. But it has an independence, which keeps off degradation, and soothes pride. The evil of a country life is the tendency which it has to encourage a torpor of the mental faculties. The sports of the field are good for the body : but, if they are not taken in great moderation, they are not good for the mind. I have been accustomed, therefore, to search for proofs of a spirit, which carried them beyond such a narrow sphere of existence.

The BESTS, of which family was the first wife of Thomas Gibbon, ( a marriage, which took place about the middle of the reign of K. James I ) were a family of repute. They had estates and residences in several parts of the County. Their chief seat was *Bibrooke* (1), in the parish of Kennington. They had another seat at *St. Lawrence, near Canterbury* : and they also resided at *Allington*, adjoining to *Maidstone* : but whether as proprietors, or whether they rented the celebrated Castle, ( once the seat of Sir Thomas Wyat, the poet ), of the *Astleys of Maidstone*, I have not discovered. It is true, that they did not move quite in the lofty sphere of the ASTLEYS (2), though they seem to have been allied to them.

(1) I think this property was sold to the *Shorters*, of which family was the mother of the late celebrated, Horace Walpole, Earl of Orford.

(2) John Astley, Esq.<sup>r</sup>, of Allington Castle, and of the Palace at Maidstone, was Master of the Jewel - Office, to Q. Elizabeth; and his wife, Margaret Grey, was early one of her Maids of Honour. Sir John Astley, their son, was Master of the Revels to K. Charles I, and died 1638. He married Katherine, daughter of Anthony Brydges, brother to Edmund 2.d Lord Chandos K. G. Sir Jacob Astley, created *Lord Astley of Reading*, was his collateral successor. See *Lord Clarendon's History*.

Two of Sir John Astley's sisters and coheirs married Sir Norton

By this first wife M.<sup>r</sup> Gibbon had a large family, who allied themselves to the neighbouring gentry. His eldest son intermarried with the family of Rooke, aunt of the celebrated Admiral, Sir George Rooke : which family were also illustrated at this time by the philosophical genius of Laurence Rooke, of whom there is an eloquent eulogy in Bishop *Sprat's History of the Royal Society*.

Nor was this little Parish of *Westcliffe* at this time totally obscure in other respects. It contained another seat, called *Solton*, long the residence of the FINETS. Here was born SIR JOHN FINET (1), a wit in the Court of K. Charles I. and Master of the Ceremonies; of whom notices occur in Weldon, and other memoir-writers; and whose *Philoxenis: Observations touching the Reception of Foreign Ambassadors in England*, 1650 (2), in-12.<sup>o</sup>, is yet held in esteem. He married a daughter of Lord Wentworth by a daughter of Sir Owen Hopton, whose other daughter married William Lord Chandos. Not merely close neighbourhood, but the common alliance of this family and that of *Gibbon* to the family of *Foche* of *Wootton*, united them intimately: and they were probably otherwise related in blood.

Knatchbull: and his brother, M.<sup>r</sup> Thomas Knatchbull, whose son, Sir Norton, was created a Bar.<sup>t</sup> 1641. The *Knatchbulls* also intermarried with the Gibbons.

(1) He is thus mentioned in the *Biographie Universelle*.

« FINET (SIR JOHN), auteur anglais, issue d'une ancienne famille d'Italie, naquit en 1571 à Soulton, près de Douvres. Il fut élevé à la cour, etc. Il fut envoyé en France comme chargé d'affaires, et fut créé Chevalier cette année, et fit en 1626, maître des Cerémonies. Ses ouvrages sont : I. *Fineti Philoxenis*, etc. — 1656. 8.<sup>o</sup> II. *Le commencement, la durée et la decadence des Etats*, etc.; traduit en anglais du français de René de Lusinge, et imprimé en 1604. — Finet mourut en 1641. ( *Biog. Univ.* v. 14, p. 545. )

(2) See Triphook's Catalogue, 1820, N.<sup>o</sup> 718,

M.<sup>r</sup> Gibbon's first wife dying, when he was yet young, he remarried a lady of the name of *Taylor*, whose mother was the widow of M.<sup>r</sup> Selherst of Tenterden, by which first husband she had a daughter Jane, a celebrated Beauty. Jane Selherst first married Edward Austen (1) of Tenterden, Esq.<sup>r</sup>, and afterwards that profound lawyer, and celebrated Politician, Sir John Maynard, Serjeant at Law, and afterwards one of the Commissioners of the Great Seal, in the reign of K. William. She died long before her last husband without issue; and settled her property on the issue of her two half-sisters, Jane, the wife of.... Codd, Esq.<sup>r</sup> of Watringbury, whose son died, issueless, during his Shrievalty of Kent, 1707; and of Alice, wife of Thomas Gibbon. In 1709 the only two survivors of her nephews and nieces were Philip Gibbon, and his sister Deborah Bradford, widow, who surrendered the property by deed to John Brydges, Esq.<sup>r</sup>, husband of their niece *Jane Gibbon* (2).

M.<sup>r</sup> Gibbon, thus nearly connected by marriage with a man who took so active a part in public life as *Sir John Maynard*, could scarcely have passed his life in obscurity: or without an easy access to the company of those, who were acting on the great stage of the world. His family was numerous; but his fortune was ample, if I may judge from the deeds of purchase, and other instruments, which have passed through my hands. He lived to a great age; and having married a third time to a

(1) They were made Baronets in 1660; and the widow of the last, was the friend of *Cowper*; and gave occasion to his *Task*.

(2) This deed thus recites the pedigree: and the will of *Deborah Bradford of St. Andrew, Holborn, widow, 1712*, gives many legacies to her relations, naming their degree of kindred. She mentions her nephews, *Edward and Thomas Gibbon, sons of her brother Matthew*, etc.

widow of fortune, gave up the residence at *Westcliffe* to his eldest son Thomas, who was educated at one of the Inns of Court, but who does not seem ever to have pursued the Law as a profession.

This *Thomas, the younger*, had several children; but I have never heard of any descendants from them; and do not doubt that they all soon became extinct.

The fate of the mansion and estate at *Westcliffe*, I am also unable to explain. Thomas, *the younger*, (who was eldest of the Brothers), quitted it long before his death; and at the decease of the Father, (1674), I have a document which proves that *Edward* and *Matthew*, sons of *Alice Taylor*, the *second* wife, each succeeded to a share in it. On this subject an anecdote has been handed down to me, which not improbably gives the origin of a family, who in the last fifty years have made some noise on the other side the Atlantic. A M.<sup>r</sup> RANDOLPH, of a good Kentish family (1), (still existing in that County), had married a sister of Edward and Matthew Gibbon. When the property of the estate became divided, *Randolph* hired it: but being a very improvident man, he became, after some time, so greatly in arrear for rent, that the owners felt themselves under the necessity of *distraining*. This was the occasion which caused a Letter from *Matthew Gibbon*, (the Historian's great grandfather), still possessed by me. *Randolph* fled to America; and was ancestor of persons of the name, who took an active part in the American Revolution. These, I take for granted, are the same who have filled with distinction the office of President of the Congress.

It is probable, that from this time the mansion of *Westcliffe* was deserted; and gradually dilapidated into a

[1] Old Recorder Randolph, of this family, was intimate with my grandfather. His grandson was late Bishop of Oxford.

farm-house. I know not when it was sold; or by whom it was purchased. But in the reign of Q. Anne it was bought by Admiral Aylmer, (created Lord Aylmer 1718, who died 1724). Thirty four years have elapsed, since I visited it. The armorial ensigns of the Gibbons just shewed themselves in faded fragments round the cornice of one of the rooms with the date of (I think) 1627 (1). It stands in an open country, high upon the white cliffs, that overlook the opposite coast of France, from Calais towards the North. The distance from Dover-Castle is, (if I recollect) not more than three miles. It is a district at present very thinly inhabited by gentry; and bleak and unpicturesque from the deficiency of trees and wood.

But I trod over it with a fulness of mind, and depth of emotion, which I cannot controul. I was busy in the company of my ancestors; and peopled it with a thousand of the dead.

I know not when Edward Gibbon, the father of my grandmother, died. In 1690, his widow had already a son born by her second husband, *M.<sup>r</sup> Yorke of Dover*; and this son was the celebrated Philip, afterwards Lord High Chancellor of England, and Earl of Hardwicke. She lived, I believe, long enough to see him rise to the rank of Attorney-General. She was a cousin of her first husband, being the daughter and heir of a *M.<sup>r</sup> Richard Gibbon*, of Dover, whose exact degree of relationship to *those of Westcliffe*, I have never been able to ascertain.

Edward Gibbon's *first wife* was Martha daughter of Sir

[1] It seems to have been the fate of this property to have been connected with men distinguished in the world. When *M.<sup>r</sup> Pitt* was Minister, he hired the farm of 400 acres, of which the cultivation formed one of his amusements during the short intervals of his residence at the neighbouring Castle of *Walmer*.



John Roberts, of Bekesborne, near Canterbury, K.<sup>1</sup>, who had another daughter married to *Thomas Tolson*, Esq.<sup>r</sup>, also of Bekesborne. I mention this last marriage, because it was to this family that the celebrated D.<sup>r</sup> *White Kennet*, a native of Dover, afterwards *Bishop of Peterborough* (1), was in his early life a Tutor. It was about the reign of K. James II, that the male line of the GIBBONS ceased to survive in *Kent*. Thomas and Edward were now dead; D.<sup>r</sup> Richard, the physician, had died many years before his father, at an early age; Philip had become a Jesuit at St. Omer's (as I have heard); MATTHEW lived; but he lived in London, engaged in a lucrative commerce. I have not learned the name of his wife *Hesther*: but she had probably no connection with Kent. The principal ties with the County having ceased; (for I do not doubt that the estate of *Westcliffe*, being now broke into parcels became inconvenient to be retained, and was sold before *Edward's* death), Matthew probably withdrew every year more and more his communications and his affections from Kent. He left his niece to the care of the COPPINS (2), of Wootton,

[1] BISHOP KENNET was a man of an ardent mind, who made literary labour his delight. His *Historical Chronicle* contains innumerable useful, though minute, historical and literary notices. His *History of England*, which is composed of a selection of Histories of particular Reigns by different eminent Authors, with his own Notes, and the chasms filled up, and the continuation given by Himself, is a valuable and intelligent Collection. But he was far from being a mere compiler; his own original compositions are full of strength and knowlege. He was a deep antiquary; a learned and acute Divine; and a liberal, enlarged, and enlightened Politician.

His brother, BASIL KENNET, was an eminent Greek scholar; and compiled the *Lives of the Grecian Poets*.

(2) She was doubly connected with the COPPINS. The last son was not only the son of an elder half-sister of her Father; but married her mother's sister, Mary, daughter of Sir John Roberts.

who had adopted her; and who having no children of their own, were likely to take ample care of her. Matthew Gibbon died about 1707; and his widow Hesther remarried Richard Acton of London, Banker, ( or Goldsmith, as that business was then called ), 3d son of Sir Walter Acton, of Aldenham, in Shropshire, Bar.<sup>t</sup>; about the same time also, ( whether before, or after ), her daughter Elizabeth Gibbon married Sir Whitmore Acton, Bar.<sup>t</sup>, the head of that ancient family; who died 1732, and was mother of Sir Richard, born Jan. 1. 1772, who died without issue, Nov. 20. 1791, æt. 80 (1).

EDWARD GIBBON, eldest son of Matthew and Hesther, born 1666, also married Elizabeth the daughter of Richard Acton; and by him had issue EDWARD born 1707, the father of the Historian.

This *first* EDWARD became a rich Merchant; and is me-

The family possessed the seat of *Woolton* for a Century. In the reign of Qu. Eliz. it was the seat of Leonard and Thomas Digges, father and grandfather of Sir Dudley Digges.

(1) He married Lady Anne Grey, daughter of Henry, 3d Earl of Stamford.

He was succeeded in the Baronetage by his next collateral heir male, *Sir John Francis Edward* Acton, born 1736, great great-grandson of Capt. Walter Acton, next elder brother of Richard, the goldsmith; which Walter had a son Walter, who died 1718, leaving ten sons. Edward, eldest son, born 1679, was father of Edward Acton, born 1709, who went to reside at *Besancon in the Province of Burgundy, in France*; and marrying a French Lady left three sons, and one daughter.

Sir John Francis Edward Acton, eldest son, is known to all Europe in the office of *Prime Minister to the King of Naples*, in which kingdom he possessed the full power and favour for so many years. He died at Palermo, 12 Aug. 1811. His eldest son, Sir Ferdinand-Richard-Edward Acton, is the present Bar.<sup>t</sup> born 25 July 1801.

morable as one of the Southsea Directors ; a bubble , in which his concern was the wreck of his fortune. He however , commenced afresh , ( as his grandson says ) ; and left an ample inheritance to his son. He died , Dec. 1736 (1).

[1] His first cousin , M.<sup>rs</sup> Brydges , survived him two years : but I believe , that all intimacy between them , if it ever existed , had long ceased. I find no letters of correspondence ; or community of interests. I have two Letters of Matthew , the father , with regard to the distress at *Westcliffe* ; and also a note in the hand-writing of M.<sup>r</sup> John Coppin. It is not improbable , that some family difference had alienated them from each other : and the preference given by Philip Gibbon and Dorothy Bradford to their niece Jane (Brydges) daughter of Edward G. over their nephew Edward G. son of Matthew , in surrendering to her , ( or rather her husband ) , the Romney Marsh property devolved from Lady Maynard ( a property , of which the inheritance has devolved on the present writer , and is now perhaps ( or lately was ) worth thirty thousand pounds , — a preference so valuable , might possibly breed dissatisfaction , that increased , till all acquaintance ended. I am sure , that all intercourse did end ; for my uncle and father were both old enough to have been well acquainted with the South-sea Director , *Edward* , who was so near in blood , as *first-cousin* to the'r mother ; and who did not die till 1736 , when they were respectively , of the ages of 24 , and 26. — I never heard them speak of any personal acquaintance with this Edward. His son , Edward , once dined with them , when quartered at Dover Castle , as Major of the Hampshire Militia. A long experience has shewn me , how very little a way mere relationship of blood , ( however near ) , goes in procuring affection , friendship , intimacy , or even intercourse : and yet there are people so stupid as to argue that even in distant connections want of communication is a strong presumption of want of relationship ! On my father's side I had no *collateral* relation nearer than *the Historian Gibbon* : yet every sort of communication had ceased between our families ; and when M.<sup>r</sup> Gibbon wrote his *Memoirs* , he had lost all trace of the Branch , from whence he sprung. I confess that this ignorance is very singular , when it is recollected , that his grandfather , who must have known

M.<sup>r</sup> Gibbon's Father died 10 Nov. 1770, æt. 64. The history of his life is given by his son; and forms an interesting domestic portrait. The manners and habits of a country gentleman of a more ceremonious age gently exercise the fancy; and the moral and intellectual traits drawn by an elegant and practised pen, excite a kind of placid, benevolent, sympathy, which, while it gives food for reflection, softens the heart.

In the autumn of 1793, M.<sup>r</sup> GIBBON returned for the last time from *Lausanne*, to die in his native country. He was in his 57<sup>th</sup> year; and he flattered himself that he had yet many years of life to come. He went immediately to his friend Lord Sheffield's at Sheffield Place in Sussex, whence I had a letter from him, inquiring for the particulars of the birth of his great *grandfather*, *Matthew*, etc. The short interval of his existence from that time, till its close in Jan.y following, is fully detailed by Lord Sheffield.

His nearest relation on the paternal side was Catharine Lady Eliot, wife of the late Lord Eliot, and mother of the present Earl of St. Germans (1). She was daughter of

so well whence his father came, only died a year before his birth.

I do not attribute it to vanity; for I cannot perceive that he gained any thing by it. M.<sup>r</sup> Phillyps Gibbon, indeed, the chief of the *Rolvenden* Branch, was among the Leaders of the Party in Parliament opposed to Sir Robert Walpole: but he was one, of whom the Historian takes no notice; and with whom his own Family seemed to have been in no communication.

When the true descent was pointed out to M.<sup>r</sup> G., his curiosity was much awakened; and he expressed great pleasure.

[1] This Earl's first wife was sister to the present Earl of Hardwicke; and grand-daughter of the Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, whose mother was a *Gibbon*.

His 2d wife, the daughter of the Rt Hon. R. P. Carew, is also a great grand-daughter of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke.

Edward Elliston, Esq.<sup>r</sup>, whose mother was a daughter of Matthew Gibbon.

---

Pedigree is a subject so trifling in the opinion of many readers; so hateful in the opinion of others; that I am willing to close this article with a few observations of more general interest. Not that I am the slave of public opinion: I can only be ashamed of that, which I do not believe to be true, or just. I believe love of pedigree to be inherent in our nature; and to stand on wise moral, political, and philosophical principles. I write not for hire, or sale: I am not paid to please the taste, and feed the passions, of the multitude. I never was a favourite with the mob: nor ever hope to be! Let those, to whom I am discordant, refrain from my pages! I ask not their perusal.

*Blair* observes, that « GENIUS is a word which in common acceptation, extends much farther than to the objects of taste. It is used to signify that talent or aptitude, which we receive from nature, for excelling in any one thing whatever. Thus we speak of a genius for mathematics, as well as of a genius for poetry; of a genius for war; for politics (1); or for any mechanical employment ».

I think that, in this sense, GIBBON may be said to have possessed no common genius. Yet I doubt if a series of accidental circumstances did not contribute largely to his excellence. His early foreign education, and his consequent intimacy with French writings; his admiration of the new philosophy, and pointed style of Voltaire, together with his patient study of the voluminous learning of what may be called *demi-classicality*, enabled him, when once he

[1] Rhetoric, and Belles-Lettres, 1. 47.

had fixed on such a subject as *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, to combine, to an inexhaustible extent, what had never been combined before, either with reference to matter or manner.

He had lived in the society of the British Capital both among rank and genius, at a time when the minds of men had become philosophical; and were in a state of activity, and fervor. He belonged to the literary club of Johnson, Burke, Goldsmith, Garrick, Reynolds, the Wartons, etc. We may imagine him, while his talents and acquirements had not yet burst into celebrity, listening with complacency to the gigantic and irresistible force of Johnson; to the blaze of Burke's fancy, dazzling at first, but still brightening and multiplying at every flash; to the laughable interludes of Goldsmith; to the pure classicality of Joseph Warton, and to the magical and electrifying tones of Garrick. Tapping his snuff-box, with the shrug of an higher cast of manners; the man of fortune; the travelled Gentleman; the senator; the Lord of Trade; we see him listening delighted, yet with a most fashionable composure of countenance; then interposing a few quaint words, which by their contrast add zest to the struggle of intellect and genius!

At length comes forth the little-expected Quarto Volume, full of polish, and point, and subtlety, and criticism, and multifarious reading, and clear, and rich compression! « What this petit-maitre gentleman, with his ruffles, and his sword, and his snuff-box; with his ceremonious civility, and his French phrases, and French address! he beats us all by the labour of his anvil; and the smoothness of his file; by his diversified and abstruse studies; and the ingenuity and novelty of his views! » The surprise lighted the fuel of fashion; and the name of GIBBON became universal!



## LXVIII.

## LORD CHANCELLOR HARDWICKE.



Among the Lord High Chancellors of England, PHILIP YORKE EARL OF HARDWICKE stands in the highest rank as a profound lawyer, and enlightened judge, whose DECREES are in every respect a standard of excellence. Such a man, it is admitted, can gain or lose little by discussions of birth and origin. He shines by his own pure and steady light; and requires no adventitious aid to the splendor of his name. On this ground his descendants seem to have been willing to leave it. They therefore treated with silent scorn the silly stories of his very low origin. It is true that he was not descended from Nobles, or even from the higher order of Gentry; but his connections were respectable, and wealthy and he was heir by his paternal and maternal grandfathers, in the parishes of Alkham and St. Margaret's-at-Cliffe, near Dover, to estates, which must, (I presume), have been of the value of L. 500 a year.

His father practised the Law at Dover, and died in 1721. His grandfather Simon Yorke was a *Merchant* (1) there.

I have already mentioned the name and connections of his mother in a former article. She was daughter and heir

[1] So described in some legal instruments in my possession: — and also (if I recollect rightly), in *his Will*. The *Mercantile Houses* at *Dover* have in our days, and at various times, been of great wealth and consideration: witness the Fectors, Minets, Brames, Hugessens, etc.

of *Richard Gibbon of Dover*; and widow of her cousin Edward Gibbon, Esq.<sup>r</sup>, of *Westcliffe*. She had by her first husband, ( to whom she was *second* wife ), an only son Philip, who died young (1).

A great deal of degrading conjecture, and lying gossip, has been founded on the circumstance of M.<sup>r</sup> Yorke not having received an University education. It has been handed down to me, by persons who had the best chance of inheriting correct information, that those who had the conduct of his education, always intending him for the Bar, deemed (rightly or wrongly (2),) another course more efficacious: and put him a pupil to M.<sup>r</sup> Salkeld, a celebrated conveyancer.

It is demonstrable, that there could have been no want of funds to give him an University education. I have frequently communicated the following instance of this great man's classical scholarship, as it has been transmitted to me by my family. He is said to have accompanied the present of AN HARE with the following *Latin Epigram*:

*Mitto tibi leporem : gratos mihi mitte lepores !*

*Sal mea commendat munera : vestra sales !*

[1] About thirty years ago the armorial achievements of these *Gibbons* were to be seen in the Churches both of St. James and St. Mary at Dover. The arms of *Gibbon* were quartered with those of *Philipot*, which was the name of the wife of Philip G. son of Thomas G. who purchased *Westcliffe* estate, of Lord Borough, about 1590. Scarcely any others of the same antiquity remained in these Churches. This is evidence that long before Lord Hardwicke's birth they were considered of the upper rank of the inhabitants of Dover.

[2] I have always been told that my grandfather, who was ten years his senior, (and had married the daughter-in-law and cousin of his mother) was much consulted in directing the course of his studies. If such advice came from him, who was an extensive scholar, it would excite my surprise; but perhaps he imagined that his own professional career had been impeded by the time consumed at Oxford!

If he was really the author of this Epigram, ( and I have the greatest confidence in the accuracy of the authority from which I received it : and it has, besides, now appeared in print many years without being contradicted ), he must have been very critically versed in classical composition. —

It seems to me to have been an extraordinary fate befalling one family, to have produced in the space of *forty-seven* years two such men as *Lord Chancellor Hardwicke*, and *M.<sup>r</sup> Gibbon, the Historian*; one indeed by the mother; the other by the father : yet both clearly of the same blood. I have been a good deal reproached for being proud of this blood ! When other families of high sounding titles, and vast estates, produce *their equals*, then I will allow them to insult me with their *superiority*.

---

Lord Chancellor Hardwicke was born Dec. 1. 1690; was appointed Solicitor-General Jan. 1. 1720, at the age of 29, Attorney-General, Jan. 17. 1723; aged 32; Chief-Justice of the King's Bench, and *Lord Hardwicke*, Oct. 31. 1733: æt. 43; and EARL OF HARDWICKE, 1754; aged 63. He died March 6. 1764, æt. 75.

His *second* son CHARLES perhaps possessed less force and solidity of mind than his father; but he had more genius; and possessed an heart of the deepest sensibility, and the most refined sentiment. He was an elegant and general scholar; and in the midst of the thorny paths of popular ambition and state affairs, had all the glowing irradiations and all the nice emotions of retired Imagination. He was born Dec. 30. 1722; and 17 Jan. 1770, was appointed Lord Chancellor at the age of 47; but died on the 3.d day after his appointment. His mother was niece to the illustrious Lord Chancellor SOMERS. His own first wife

was daughter and heir of William Freman, Esq.<sup>r</sup>, of Hamels, in Hertfordshire, by Catherine heiress of *Sir Thomas Pope Blount*, of *Tittenhanger*, in the same County, Bar.<sup>l</sup> (1). By her he was father of the present Earl of Hardwicke, K. G.

## LXIX.

CONSOLATION : A POEM ADDRESSED TO  
LADY BRYDGES.

BY EDWARD QUILLINAN, ESQ.<sup>r</sup>



Thy Child was lull'd on Death's cold couch to sleep ;  
 Years since have past, and yet I see thee weep ;  
 Yet yet, by busy memory kept alive,  
 The heart-struck Mother's griefs, alas, survive !  
 Is there no blessed spell, no opiate blest,  
 To cheat a Mother's memory to rest ?  
 Look on the lovely treasures that remain ;  
 Let these seduce thee from regrets so vain !  
 Oh, no : by links too powerful 'are allied  
 The joy for these that live, the woe for Him that died.

In life's young season, when the world was new,  
 And Love adorn'd it with enchantment's hue,  
 He, the first pledge which Love awoke to light,  
 Was more than angel in thy partial sight.  
 Ah ! who can tell the youthful Mother's joy,  
 When first her arms received her infant Boy ?  
 When first she saw, what Fancy help'd to trace,

[1] See the Inscription for *Sir William Mainwaring*.

The Father's features in his little face !  
When first she gave her first maternal kiss ,  
Ah ! what are words to paint a mothers bliss !

Fed from thy breast, in charms the infant grew ,  
Fresh as the may-morn flower that drinks the dew.  
Then, as the term of boyhood just began ,  
How well the Boy gave promise of the Man,  
When, warm for enterprize, and pall'd with ease ,  
The gallant Child went forth, and dar'd the Seas !  
What serves it here in long detail to tell  
The proving chances that the Child befell :  
Each toil and watch endur'd by day and night ,  
Each rough assault of tempest or of fight ;  
To tell what lands he saw ; how oft he bore  
Some classic relic from the famous shore :  
How oft return'd ( ah ! why again to roam ? )  
To taste the dear felicity of home ,  
And pause awhile from Ocean's rude alarms ;  
The harbour of his rest a Mother's arms.

I saw, ere last the Wanderer left thy side ,  
This cherish'd object of thy pain and pride.  
I saw him clad with beauty as a vest :  
His graceful form the graceful mind express'd.  
I mark'd that mind, so young, yet so matur'd,  
By painful trial manfully endur'd.  
Talent's strong sun had forced the vernal shoot ;  
At once it bore the blossom aud the fruit.  
Then Friendship too, in sympathy with thee ,  
Was idly dreaming what the youth would be :  
A Hero , diadem'd with Glory's crown ,  
To gild his ancient name with new renown.  
Where is he now ? thus gifted and thus fair ,  
Could not the hand of heaven the stroke forbear ?  
So young , and good , and beautiful , and brave !

Was it not hard to doom him to the grave?  
To bid Disease assail with jealous tooth  
The rich unfolding roses of his youth,  
And, blighting them, the Mother's hope to blight,  
The hope that promised such a long delight?  
Yet, it were something still, if o'er the clay  
Of Him thus early snatch'd from life away,  
Maternal love but now and then might keep  
A little sacred interval, to weep.  
Alas! fond Mother! this too is denied;  
Far, far away from home, from Thee, he died.  
Minorca's air receiv'd his latest breath;  
It's earth too gave his narrow cell of death.  
To dew his fading cheek, with pious tear,  
No parent, brother, sister tended near:  
No sister, brother, parent, e'er must weep  
Beside the bed, wherein his ashes sleep.

Child of the Ocean! had the troubled wave,  
Thine own proud element, become thy grave,  
When all thy soul with generous rage was warm'd,  
Had'st Thou been struck while gallant battle storm'd  
Then by thy fall had fame at least been brought!  
So whispers Fancy to a mother's thought.  
Delusion! could that mother's thought have borne  
The bosom gash'd, the limb asunder torn,  
The life-blood, none perhaps its tide to check,  
Effusive o'er the horror-drenched deck,  
The form convulsed, the shriek of torment wild,  
The last dull moaning of her dying Child?  
No, no, though doom'd to fall; poor Boy, t' was well,  
That not in Battle's hideous fray He fell.

Thy tears, fond mother, though so long they flow,  
Are not the rash impiety of woe.  
Rebellion brands not the afflicted mind,



Regret may deeply mourn, yet be resigned :  
And Heaven, in mercy to a mother's grief,  
Permits those tears to lend a sad relief.  
Perchance at times tis e'en allow'd thy Boy  
To quit for Thee his Paradise of joy !  
Perchance, e'en now, the disembodied Saint  
Is hovering near, to silence Grief's complaint,  
Breathe comfort to his mother's aching heart,  
And act at once the Son's and Angel's part.

I do believe, that when the Good ascend,  
To live the empyreal life that ne'er shall end,  
'Tis not denied them in that world to meet  
Those for whose sakes e'en this bad world was sweet;  
That friends and kindred are allow'd above  
Each to know each again, in purer love;  
That in the presence of the Great Ador'd,  
Again the spouse may meet the spouse deplor'd;  
Sister and Brother form the ring again,  
And parted Lovers bind the broken chain;  
Fathers amidst their gather'd children rest,  
And tender mothers bless them and be bless'd.

I do believe to mothers such as Thou,  
Will Heaven this perfect blessedness allow.  
When Seraphs up to Heaven thy soul translate,  
Thy child shall meet Thee at the golden gate;  
Shall bid thee welcome to the Promis'd Land,  
Shall guide thee in through all the glorious band;  
While all the Angels clap their wings for joy,  
And hail ye both, the mother and her Boy !

And these, yet left to her who gave them birth,  
To cheer her further sojourn upon earth,  
These who with youth elate, and blind to care,  
Now round thee wanton, shall rejoin thee there.  
There too, where never the high heart is rack'd

Where never cares the noble mind distract,  
 Where, Feeling, Fancy, Genius, unrepress'd,  
 May thrill, expand, exalt the unburthen'd breast,  
 There shall the generous Lyre, that here below  
 Wafts scarce a note beside the note of woe,  
 No more by sorrow warp'd, by envy jarr'd,  
 Breathe all the lofty spirit of the Bard,  
 Whom, while thine offspring listen to that Lyre,  
 Their eyes and hearts shall know, and bless their Sire.

Lee Priory, Sept. 16. 1815.

---

The following Extract from the *Gentleman's Magazine* for April, 1812, may explain some part of the preceding Poem.

« February 25.<sup>th</sup>, 1812, died at Minorca, of a fever brought on by the measles, GREY MATTHEW BRYDGES (of his Majesty's ship, Malta, Admiral Hallowell), third son (1) of SIR EGERTON BRYDGES, of Lee Priory near Canterbury. He was aged only fourteen years and four months; of which he had been five and an half at sea; having embarked in the Glatton, Captain Seccombe, in July 1806, with whom he remained in the Mediterranean till that lamented officer's death under the walls of Reggio, in Feb. 1808. In June 1808, after only a month spent at home, he embarked on board Le Tigre, Captain Hallowell, at Deal; and sailed for the Baltic, and thence accompanied it again to the Mediterranean in November, where he remained till the ship again returned to Plymouth, in July 1811; and was paid off. After a vacation of only four months, which he spent in the bosom of his family, he embarked with his old Captain (who had now obtained a Flag); in the Malta; and sailed in January 1812 a third time for the Mediterranean. Thus had this extraor-

[1] He was eldest son to the Lady to whom the Poem is addressed.

dinary Boy, in the very years of Childhood, passed a life of activity, extent, and public service, which falls to the lot of few men, however aged. How noble his spirit was; how enlarged his understanding; how manly and solid his knowledge; yet with the warmest and tenderest domestic affections; it would only seem like exaggeration to describe. It had appeared as if he was forming his wonderful character for some mighty part on the grand theatre of the world; but it has pleased Divine Providence to shew us how vain and fallacious are all our hopes here, and to turn the glory of his parents and family into a subject of inconsolable sorrow and regret. He died the last week of February (his ship being absent on a Cruise), and was buried near several other British officers under one of the bastions of Fort Philip; attended by his Countrymen, Capt Kittoe of the Hibernia, and M.<sup>r</sup> Legeyt, who, accidentally hearing of the melancholy event, most kindly gave their services on the awful occasion ».

## LXX.

## IN MEMORY

OF EDWARD WILLIAM GEORGE BRYDGES;

Who died at Lee Priory on the 13.<sup>th</sup> of June, 1816:

*Aged Fifteen Years and Seven Months.*

Another blow from heaven! — and wherefore thus? —  
 Shall human woe the act of heaven discuss?  
 Shall roused Affliction lift to God its eye,  
 And, knowing that he will'd it, question why? —

Tried Mother, bow thy head, and quell thy breast,  
And check the unholy murmur ere express'd !  
There was too much of good about thee still,  
Baffling the jealous counterpoise of ill.  
The draught of life was yet too strong for care ;  
Schemes were too quick and hopes too busy there ;  
So grief again, as bubbles mantled up ,  
Was sent to tame the spirit of the cup.

Ask thine own heart — descend into that cell ,  
Where lives the Priestess of Truth's Oracle ,  
Conscience , that breathes self-knowledge : She will say ,  
A Mother's pride too deeply rooted lay  
Within thy bosom ; giving thoughts of earth  
More room than aught terrestrial should be worth.  
Thy love of thine own lovely race was such  
As held thee fetter'd to the world too much :  
So Death was made thy visitor again ,  
To break another rivet of the chain ,  
That to thy mind's ambition might be given  
A freer aspiration after heaven.

Twice on the treasure of thy soul the hand  
That lent it has enforced a stern demand.  
Yet think, afflicted Parent, for thy peace ,  
How may the seeming loss thy wealth increase !  
If both so early in the grave they lie ,  
They both were innocent, and fit to die.  
Fairer than stars their spirits glow above ;  
And from their sphere depends a chain of love ,  
A chain of light to thee and thine descending ,  
Whereby riven hearts in mystic links are blending ;  
And the pure fires with which those spirits glow ,  
Can thrill and lighten on the hearts below.

Direct thy gaze, thou cherisher of woes ,  
Where yon meek Spire the hamlet's temple shews !

BRYDGES.

Is there no comfort in that place of prayer? —  
Alas, those tears deny all solace there :  
Fuller, and faster at the view they fall ;  
As though that sight were bitterer than all.  
Well, who shall censure those o'erflowing eyes ?  
Religion's self will scarce refuse her sighs.  
We all remember when each Sabbath Morn  
Saw thy young group that humble fane adorn ;  
With *him*, among the rest, of guileless brow —  
Where is that dear and guileless Edward now ! —  
When then ye glanced upon the vault beneath,  
No echo warn'd you from that seat of death,  
Whose shade at last must shroud you all, that doom  
Adjudg'd *him* next into that dark cold room.

Death stole upon thee in a doubtful mask ;  
The black destroyer wanton'd with his task ;  
And mock'd with promise thy maternal hope ;  
And gave — that's some relief — thy virtues scope.  
We all remember — how can we forget —  
Those nightly vigils, that should soothe regret ;  
Those daily cares, and duties overpaid ;  
While the youth wasted to a bloodless shade.  
We all remember how, until the last,  
Clung by his side this mother unsurpast ;  
Caught every tone, consulted every look,  
Read every thought, and every wish o'ertook ;  
And, in despite of pain's exerted fangs,  
Foild the tormentor of his keenest pangs.

Propp'd on his pillow as the victim lay,  
While life just pruned her wings to fleet away,  
Cheer'd by her flutter, it was sweet, he said,  
To lie thus careless on a tranquil bed :  
And thence behold the trees in tender green,  
And all the freshness of a vernal scene ;

And feel the breeze that sometimes flew by stealth  
To fan his cheek, and warble words of health. —  
Then came the hour! — the spirit waxing dim;  
The helpless, hopeless feebleness of limb;  
The wandering hands that quarrell'd with the air;  
The glance that flicker'd round, but knew not where;  
The language wilder than the trackless wind;  
The last delirious energies of mind;  
The cheeks, like wither'd aspen leaves in hue,  
And like those leaves all coldly shuddering too;  
The quivering throat's half-choak'd and struggling cry;  
And last — that fix'd expression of the eye! —  
Not yet; not yet; it cannot yet be o'er: —  
The soul still lights that face — O gaze no more,  
Unhappy Father! Wherefore didst thou stay,  
Watching the progress of thine own decay,  
The dread mortality of thine own flesh —  
That seems in those that yet remain so fresh?  
Away, even She who watch'd as none have watch'd,  
She, the poor Mother with the heart unmatch'd,  
Dragg'd by the arm of friendship from the room,  
Has left him — to the agents of the tomb!


Take thy last look, and let it linger not;  
And let us lead thee from this blighted spot!  
In your sepulchral chamber, corse to corse,  
Ye still shall meet, in spite of this divorce;  
In the eternal Kingdom, soul to soul,  
Ye still may live, when planets cease to roll!





## LXXI.

## STANZAS WRITTEN AT SUDELEY CASTLE.

*Addressed to Sir E. BRYDGES.*  
BY EDWARD QUILLINAN ESQ.<sup>r</sup>

## I.

Where is thy glory, Sudeley? though thy wall  
With stubborn strength the hand of Time defies,  
The sun looks down into thy roofless hall,  
And through thy courts with splendor's mockery pries.  
Where are thine ancient Lords? the Brave? the wise?  
Crumbled to dust in yonder Gothic Fane.  
Where are their children's children? None replies.  
Swept from their trunk in Chance's hurricane,  
The branches wave no more on Cotswold's old domain.

## II.

Yet here the sons of CHANDOS, in their day  
Of greatness, ruled in no ungentle sort:  
Here Want was succour'd; Sorrow here grew gay;  
And WINCHCOMBE'S Castle was no Tyrant's Fort:  
Here too the imperial Dame with Barons girt,  
She who could make the Crowns and Nations bow,  
Relax'd, at Welcome's voice, her lion port,  
And soften'd into smiles her stately brow:  
What wast thou then, famed Pile! Ah changed! what art  
thou now!

## III.

Now savage elders flourish in thy courts ;  
The thistle now thy lorn recesses haunts ;  
Perch'd on thy walls the wild geranium sports ,  
And the rude mallows , deck'd in purple , flaunts :  
Behold , proud Castle , thine inhabitants !  
See how their nodding heads the zephyr hail ,  
As if they mock'd thee with triumphant taunts ,  
As vistory's banners to each passing gale  
From some dismantled Fort relate their boastful tale.

## IV.

Are they not emblems , these obtrusive flowers ,  
Thus choaking up the sculptured Leopard's trace ,  
And the old Cross on Sudeley's honour'd towers ,  
Are they not emblems of the motly race  
Upraised by Mammon from their humble place ?  
Those weeds that on the ruins of the Great  
Arise in rank luxuriance , and deface  
The genealogic types of reverend date ,  
And flirt new symbols forth , and wear a gaudy state.

## V.

Brydges ; the proud tear in thy dark eye swells ,  
When History thy Forefather's fame displays ,  
And hoar Tradition garrulously tells  
Tales that their shades to the mind's vision raise ,  
Like forms shewn dimly through a Twilight haze :  
Fancy the while in her insidious strain ,  
Whispering sweet words , exaggerates the praise ,  
The power , and wealth , and chivalry , and train  
Of thy baronial Sires . . . magnificently vain.

## VI.

Then follows Memory's fancy-withering part :  
She bends, as a fond Sister, o'er the Urn  
Of Youth's dead Expectations, the sad Heart;  
And culls up every woe that thou hast borne,  
And murmurs till the bosom is o'erworn,  
And the plumed spirit of ambition droops.  
Thus to regrets life's vernal projects turn :  
Pain's poisonous fruit succeeds the flowery hopes  
That bloom'd in Denton's vale, and Wootton's sylvan slopes.

## VII.

Yet why repine? . . . no more the Lydian stream  
Devolves in its old bed the golden tide;  
Ancestrel dignities have ceased to beam  
Upon the children of a house of pride :  
And thou, tis true, hast been severely tried :  
To the maternal legacy of care  
Thy birthright by no brother was denied ;  
No smooth supplanter kindly claim'd thy share,  
As hard Rebecca's Hope beguiled the Patriarch's heir.

## VIII.

Yet why, too fondly querulous, repine?  
Still many a pure delight thy journey cheers ;  
And, though a way with thorns perplex'd is thine,  
Fresh flowers still greet thee in the vale of tears;  
And Love walks with thee to the goal of years ;  
And thou hast treasures, as Cornelia's prized ;  
And even of worldly state enough appears,  
And if enough, the rest should be despised ;  
Peace visits not the heart where pride is unchastised.

## IX.

Of briers the earth, of clouds the heaven to clear,  
 Hast thou not too the love of lore and song?  
 If Sudeley now the haughty head could rear,  
 As when its battlements withstood the strong,  
 And frown'd upon Rebellion, if the throng  
 Of chivalry and beauty, as of yore,  
 Still danced its beryl-glittering halls along,  
 And thou wert Lord of hill, and plain, and tower,  
 While all within was pomp, and all without was power;

## X.

Could all the specious pageantry convey  
 A genuine pleasure to the thoughtful mind,  
 Which one, who loves like thee the Muse's lay,  
 Within the shades of quiet cannot find?  
 Ambition's pillars shake with every wind,  
 And like these Ruins, soon or late, must fall;  
 But the green wreaths in Learning's bowers entwined  
 Will grace the tomb, as o'er yon Chapel-wall  
 The clustering ivy spreads its rich enduring pall.

---

## LXXII.

## E P I T A P H

*In the Church of PENSURST, Kent.*



*Here lies the Body of  
 William Egerton, LLD.*

*He was*

*Grandson of John, Earl of Bridgewater,*

*But received less honour from his noble descent,  
 Than from his personal qualifications :  
 For he had a strong memory ,  
 And most excellent parts ;  
 Both which were greatly improved by  
 A learned education :  
 And as his birth gave him an opportunity  
 Of being brought up , and  
 Living in the best company ;  
 So he made a suitable improvement from it ;  
 Happily mixing the knowlege of the Scholar  
 With the politeness of the Gentleman.  
 He had talents  
 Peculiarly fitted for conversation ;  
 For , with a great vivacity ,  
 He had a command and fluency of words ,  
 Which he well knew how to express  
 To such advantage ,  
 As might make him either entertaining or instructive.  
 Thus accomplished , it is no wonder  
 He was distinguished in his profession :  
 Being made Chaplain to two succeeding Kings ,  
 Rector of Penshurst ,  
 And All-Hallows , Lombard street ;  
 Chancellor and Prebendary of Hereford ;  
 And Prebendary of Canterbury.  
 He left behind him  
 Two daughters and one son ,  
 By Anne , daughter of Sir Francis Head , Bart.  
 Who caused this marble to be laid down ,  
 As a slender memorial  
 Of her gratitude and affection  
 To the memory of the best of Husbands.  
 He died Feb. 26 , 1737 , æt 57.*

## ANOTHER.

*Near this place lieth the Body  
Of Anne, relict of William Egerton LLD.  
Who died March 5, 1778,  
Aged 74.*

*The constant tenor of her life  
Was the best preparation for death.  
As she was eminently distinguished  
For discharging every duty in life  
In the most amiable manner,  
And upon the purest motives.  
All who knew her, loved and revered her,  
And must sooner or later be happy,  
If they follow her example.*

---

## LXXIII.

## ROUSSEAU.




We talk a great deal of the necessity of the virtue of action or conduct combined with the virtues of the mind. If we speak of the virtues of the mind, of which the picture is conveyed to the Public by the pen, the conduct of the author may concern the happiness of himself and of those immediately connected with him; but the fruit of the mind alone is that with which the Public have any interest.

The beautiful imagination, and exquisite sentiments of ROUSSEAU are calculated to elevate, to melt, and to instruct us, unqualified and undiminished by a regard to the inconsistencies of his temper, or his actions.



Madame de Staël in her *Lettres sur Rousseau* says with as much justice as felicitous eloquence :

« Il avait une grande puissance de raison sur les matières abstraites , sur les objets qui n'ont de réalité que dans la pensée , et une extravagance absolue sur tout ce qui tient à la connoissance du monde ; il avait de tout une trop grande dose ; à force d'être supérieur , il était près d'être fou. C'était un homme fait pour vivre dans la retraite avec un petit nombre de personnes d'un esprit borné , afin que rien n'ajoutât à son agitation intérieure , et qu'il fût environné de calme. Il était bon ; les inférieurs l'adoraient ; ce sont eux qui jouissent sur tout de cette qualité ; mais Paris l'avait troublé. Il était né pour la société de la nature , et non pour celle d'institution. Tous ses ouvrages expriment l'horreur qu'elle lui inspirait ; il ne lui fut possible ni de la comprendre , ni de la supporter ; c'était un sauvage des bords de l'Orenoque , qui se fût trouvé heureux de passer sa vie à regarder couler l'eau. Il était né contemplatif , et la rêverie faisait son bonheur suprême ; son esprit et son cœur tour-à-tour s'emparaient de lui. Il vivait dans son imagination ; le monde passait doucement sous ses yeux ; la religion , les hommes , l'amour , la politique l'occupaient successivement. Après s'être promené seul tout le jour , il revenait calme et doux : les méchans gagnent-ils à rester avec eux-mêmes ! On ne peut pas dire cependant que Rousseau fut vertueux , parce qu'il faut des actions et de la suite dans ces actions pour mériter cet éloge ; mais c'était un homme qu'il fallait laisser penser sans en rien exiger de plus ; qu'il fallait conduire comme un enfant , et écouter comme un oracle ; dont le cœur était profondément sensible , et qu'on devait ménager , non avec les précautions ordinaires , mais avec celles qu'un tel caractère exigeait ; il ne fallait pas s'en fier à sa propre innocence. »



## LXXIV.

MEMOIR OF M.<sup>rs</sup> MONTAGU.

*Extracted from Biographie universelle , Vol. 29, p. 425.*

*Paris 1821.*

MONTAGU (ELIZABETH), dame anglaise, aussi distinguée par son érudition que par son esprit, était fille de Mathieu Robinson, riche propriétaire, et d'Élisabeth Drake. Elle naquit à York, le 2 Octobre 1720, et fut élevée à Cambridge, où résidait sa famille, par les soins du docteur Conyers Middleton, second mari de son aïeule. Le docteur Middleton exigeait que sa jeune et belle pupille lui présentât le résumé de toutes les conversations savantes auxquelles elle était souvent présente dans sa société. Il l'habitua ainsi à écouter attentivement et à analyser dans son esprit tout ce qu'elle entendait.

Elle épousa, en 1742, Édouard Montagu, petit-fils du premier comte de Sandwich, et membre de plusieurs parlements successifs pour le bourg d'Huntingdon. Il mourut en 1775, laissant à sa veuve une fortune considérable, dont elle fit le plus noble usage pendant le cours de sa longue carrière, qu'elle termina, le 25 Août 1800, à l'âge de quatre-vingts ans.

Mistriss Montagu se fit remarquer de bonne heure comme auteur; d'abord, par ses *Dialogues des Morts*, publiés avec ceux de Lord Lyttelton; et, ensuite, par un *Essai sur le genie et les écrits de Shakspeare*, qui parut en 1769, ouvrage classique et élégant, où l'on trouve beaucoup plus

de savoir et de critique qu'on n'en devait attendre d'une femme du grand monde.

La manière dont les jugements de Voltaire sont relevés dans cet Essai, entrepris surtout pour venger Shakspeare des sarcasmes de l'auteur de la *Henriade*, attira à Mistriss Montagu l'animadversion de cet homme illustre, qu'elle avait autrefois connu en Angleterre : il ne lui pardonna jamais, et il ne pouvait prononcer son nom de sang-froid (1). Mistriss Montagu ayant fait un voyage en France, envoya son *Essai sur Shakspeare* à Voltaire, avec cette épigraphe :

..... *Pallas te, hoc vulnere, Pallas*  
*Immolat.*

Se trouvant à Paris, quelques semaines après (1776), elle apprit, en société, que le philosophe de Ferney avait dit que ce n'était pas une merveille de trouver quelques perles dans l'énorme fumier de Shakspeare : elle répliqua vivement, en faisant illusion aux emprunts de Voltaire, que c'était pourtant à ce fumier qu'il devait une partie de son meilleur grain.

Mistriss Montagu vivait dans l'intimité de tout ce qu'il y avait de grand et d'illustre dans les lettres en Angleterre. Pope, Johnson, Goldsmith, Pulteney, depuis Lord Bath, Lyttelton, Burke, etc., formaient sa société (2). Le doc-

(1) Voltaire, dans sa *Lettre à l'Académie Française*, lue le 25 Août 1776, juge sévèrement le tragique anglais. Il avait fait la même chose dans son *Appel à toutes les nations de l'Europe*, 1761, in-8. Mistriss Montagu prit la plume pour la défense de son compatriote; et son ouvrage a été traduit en français sous ce titre : *Apologie de Shakspeare, en réponse à la critique de M. de Voltaire*, 1777, in-8. Voltaire la réfuta dans une nouvelle *Lettre à l'Académie*, imprimée à la tête d'*Irène*. A. B.-t.

(2) Mistriss Montagu avait formé une société littéraire qui, pendant plusieurs années, attira l'attention générale, sous le nom de

teur Beattie et Mistriss Carter furent, pendant toute leur vie, ses amis et ses correspondants.

Mistriss Montagu joignait à un profond jugement et à une imagination vive et brillante, un goût aussi pur que sévère. Le recueil des *Lettres* que nous avons d'elle, et tout ce que les contemporains racontent du charme de sa conversation, à-la-fois instructive et piquante, prouvent qu'elle méritait l'estime que les gens les plus érudits accordaient à ses talents.

Elle avait cependant le défaut de vouloir se conformer trop strictement aux mœurs et aux usages du grand monde qu'elle fréquentait. Le désir excessif qu'elle avait de plaire et d'obtenir la réputation de femme à la mode, lui faisant souvent adopter un ton léger et frivole, qui trompait les observateurs superficiels.

Depuis sa mort, *quatre volumes de sa CORRESPONDANCE* ont été publiée par son neveu (Mathieu Montagu) : il paraît qu'il se propose d'en faire paraître encore, qui compléteront sans doute l'idée favorable qu'on s'est formée de Mistriss Montagu.

D. - Z. - S. »

*Club des bas bleus (Blue stockings Club).* On s'est livré, dans le temps, à beaucoup de conjectures pour trouver l'origine de cette singulière dénomination. Il paraît qu'elle provint de ce qu'une personne qui en faisant partie, s'étant excusée de paraître à une des premières réunions, parce qu'elle était en déshabillé du matin, il lui fut répondu qu'on s'occupait peu de costume dans une société uniquement consacrée à cultiver l'esprit. « On fait si peu d'attention à l'habillement des personnes qui s'y rendent, ajouta-t-on, qu'un gentilhomme *en bas bleus* ne serait même pas trouvé mis ridiculement. »

It arose, in truth, from the *Blue Stockings* worn by Mr Stillingfleet, a man distinguished both in literature, and as a naturalist, who was an early and constant frequenter of this Society. Hannah More has written a Poem on the subject.

The  
 FOLLOWING CHARACTER OF M<sup>rs</sup>. MONTAGU  
*is extracted from the Biographical Peerage,*  
*London, 1817, 18.<sup>o</sup> vol. IV, p. 352.*



« Few persons enjoyed as distinguished a reputation in her day as M.<sup>rs</sup> Montagu. Her extraordinary talents, added to a beautiful person, made her, from a very early age, the admiration of all her acquaintance. Her father was a man of wit, and a polished gentleman, who lived among the higher ranks, and was never happy out of society: a country life, and the manners of country squires, were his detestation; and he was not contented but when he could escape from the solitary mansion of Horton to the animation of Bond-street, and the refinement and cheerfulness of the evening circles which a court and capital afforded. The daughter inherited much of her father's liveliness and love of pleasure. Her connections in Cambridgeshire had introduced her from a child at the house of the second Earl of Oxford, at Wimpole, the resort of wit and learning; where her lively spirit and brilliant faculties, soon caught the emulation of genius and fame. Lord Oxford's daughter, afterwards Duchess of Portland, was her companion; and she was listened to as a prodigy for colloquial powers; while her letters, abounding in premature command both of ideas and language, were read with praise, delight and astonishment. Thus flattered distinguished and followed, she thought that the winters, which her mother dedicated with unweaired affection to her nursery amid the loneliness of the groves of Horton, were to her but the burial of faculties which she panted to display on the theatre

of the world. Yet her goodnature made her endure it with cheerfulness, while she amused herself by describing to her correspondents with admirable vivacity and humour some of the scenes and manners around her. At length, at an early age, when little more than twenty, the attraction of an honourable alliance, which might retain her in the highest circles, induced her to marry M.<sup>r</sup> Montagu, whose age was nearly double her own : this occurred about 1742. Hence her wit, her beauty, her amiable and attractive manners, put her at the head of fashion and of literature. Lord Lyttelton, Lord Bath, Gilbert West, D.<sup>r</sup> Johnson, M.<sup>rs</sup> Carter, M.<sup>rs</sup> Talbot, and numerous others, all encircled her, adorned her table, corresponded with her, and gave her their confidence, or their devotion. About 1765, she published her *Essay on the Genius of Shakespeare*; a composition of so much eloquence, and in so brilliant a style of criticism, as to have suppressed even all attempts at any thing of the same kind. M.<sup>rs</sup> Montagu survived the date of this work between 30 and 40 years; but gave to the world no other publication. During this long period, she continued to correspond with many of the most eminent literati of her day; and to exhibit in them a mind of such extraordinary activity, so rich in reflections upon life and manners, as well as in expression and the brilliance of inexhaustible imagery, as to have put them hitherto out of any danger of being eclipsed or rivalled. They have faults of which the most striking are, an occasional overambition of wit; and sometimes, a colloquiality of phrase and imagery, which the fastidiousness of the present age may deem to verge on coarseness. Now and then her letters have the appearance of straining to shew her ingenuity in what may plausibly be said on a subject, rather than the result of her own conviction. She was good-natured, polite, acute, and eloquent; and full



of the stores of wisdom, imagination, and taste ; but more fond of ostentation and vanity, than became her great gifts of nature and art. She died in 1800 , at the age of 80 , at her splendid house in Portman Square. Her nephew, on whom she imposed her married name , and on whom she settled her large landed property derived from her husband's will, has since published *Four volumes of her Letters* ; and announces more.

---

M.<sup>rs</sup> S C O T T.

Her younger sister, Sarah, married George Louis Scott, Esq.<sup>r</sup>, and died at Catton in Norfolk, in 1795. She had, like M.<sup>rs</sup> M., a turn for literature ; but her talents were less brilliant than those of M.<sup>rs</sup> Montagu, and were more adapted to works of history than those of imagination. Her industry and curiosity were great ; her memory was strong ; and her judgment sound. *Her Life of d'Aubigné* is well executed ; it is clear, discriminating ; well-selected, and judicious ; and obtained for her some popularity as an author. She wrote numerous other pieces ; of which she gave away the produce in charity ; for her charity was not only extensive, but sometimes profuse almost to rashness.

---

## LXXV.

VERSES WRITTEN AS A PREFACE TO THE  
SYLVAN WANDERER.

In MDCCCXV.



Beneath the trees , that with luxuriant shade  
O'erhang this Gothic arch , supinely laid ,  
I lose th' Autumnal hours ; and while a train  
Of rapid fancies pass my shifting brain ,  
Leave them not quite unheeded in my strain.

Thus broken , glides the busy year away ;  
And thus I travel to the final day ,  
When freed from cares that make this heart their prey ,  
Within the grave my mortal part shall rest ,  
And my soul rise , I trust , among the blest !

When first in leafy Wootton's lone retreat ,  
The Muse's haunts my infant tongue would greet ,  
I vow'd , if She but deign'd her favouring smile ,  
No other passion should my steps beguile ;  
But fickle to my hopes , by fits alone ,  
Her glances on my humble prayers were thrown :  
Then mingled purposes , and changing mind ,  
Uncertain as the courses of the wind ,  
Left each new labour , ere 'twas well begun ;  
And this day's task was by the next undone !

Since torn , dear Native Spot , from thy embrace ,  
Fate bade me in the worldling's paths to pace ,

E'er eighteen summers had matur'd a form,  
With every wild and youthful passion warm,  
In fields how wide, through what a varied scene  
Of pleasures, dangers, sufferings have I been!  
How little thought I, when for Granta's towers  
I left thy falling leaves, and fading flowers,  
That ne'er again my hapless feet should roam  
Beneath thy shades, and claim them for my home.  
Ere yet a month from scenes so lovely torn,  
An honour'd parent to his grave was borne!  
Then, where the Hall with mirth and youth had rung,  
And Beauty laugh'd, and talk'd, and danc'd and sung,  
The social circle ceased the day to cheer,  
And lonely Silence reign'd for many a year.

Now' mid the crowded throngs of men I felt  
The cruel blows that struggling Envy dealt;  
And innocent days, and peaceful nights, no more  
Were sooth'd with Fancy's dreams, and Learning's lore.

Ambition spread before my dazzled eyes  
An awful steep; yet bade me strive to rise.  
But hate to mingle in the clamorous fray,  
Where coarser spirits struggle for the sway;  
And dread of scorn, and pride that would not yield  
Against a meaner foe to take the field,  
Oft as new ardors waked within my breast,  
Cross'd every step, and every chance supprest.

O years, that long had turn'd this hair to white,  
Ere yet my thirtieth winter took its flight:  
Still, as ye urg'd your mournful course anew,  
More dire in dangers, or in griefs ye grew!  
In thickest shades I hid my tearful form;  
There, chill'd without, I strove my heart to warm;  
E'en there did Malice, and revengeful Ire,  
Pierce the retreat, and dash the hallowed fire.

O never, never were there bowers so deep,  
To which calumnious Hatred could not creep!  
Long countless days I toil'd, and sigh'd and wept;  
Long nights in none but broken slumbers slept!  
But, hell-born Hatred, to thine iron heart  
No griefs will e'er a ray of pity dart.  
To break the bands of Friendship and of Love;  
The charms that soften sorrow to remove;  
To leave the victim thou hast sworn thy foe,  
Naked, defenceless, lonely to his woe,  
This is thy triumph! Human Misery  
Owes half her keenest sufferings to thee!

But will no transient beams of sun invade  
This gloomy, and scarce penetrable shade?  
O lovely ray, thou com'st! thy cheering light  
I hail, to chase my spirit's lengthen'd night!  
Disperse, ye clouds! and let the day-star shine,  
And o'er the past no sad regrets shall pine!

It dawns; but as along the sky it goes,  
Clouds cross, by fits; and tempests interpose.  
A little while the genial beams impart  
A glow of hope and boldness to my heart;  
How soon to sink again! The magic spell  
Scarce lingers, while its kind approach I tell.

If thus a victim to Misfortune's snares,  
Prey to Disease, or to consuming Cares,  
I yet can seize the lyre, and court the Muse,  
And transient comfort o'er this breast diffuse;  
If yet my soul pours forth the moral lay,  
And seeks with mental flowers to deck the day:  
Dear Fount of purest waves, if where, a boy,  
I drank with awful and mysterious joy,  
I struggle still, or waking, or in dream,  
To cool my thirst with thy immortal stream;

May the small gift that now at Virtue's shrine  
Humbly I lay, receive a smile benign !

If not to this the brilliant hues belong ,  
That decorate an happier son of song ,  
Breath'd from the heart, in age , as once in youth,  
O stamp it with the holier praise of Truth !

*Lee Priory, Sept. 12, 1815.*

## LXXVI.

### POETICAL ADDRESS

TO THE

REVEREND CHARLES POWLETT.

In MDCCCXVII.

Long is the space and variably the climes  
Have pass'd in storms and sunshine, since the times  
When first we met in GRANTA'S walks, and drew  
Forms of enchantment in the distant view !  
Those Forms, as nearer we approach'd, were seen  
Transform'd to Demons of terrific mien ;  
And Grief alone, through many a weeping year,  
Darkness behind us gave; before us Fear !  
Yet freed by starts from comfortless Despair,  
Not idly pass'd those days of Hope or Care.  
To learning some, and grave pursuits were given;  
In some, with stripes were Hate and Envy driven!  
Full thirty times and more the fitful Sun  
Wearily through his annual course has run ,

Since blythe in HACKWOOD'S Ducal Hall I heard  
Thy frolic tales of future joy preferr'd.  
The present then was vapid, barren, cold :  
We sigh'd the distant prospect to behold.  
But ah, compared with those too slighted days,  
How big the years to come with clouds and frays !  
Now wrinkled Age comes on, and hoary hairs,  
We strive with quiet to compose our cares :  
If e'en a gleam of pleasure intervene,  
We hail the blessing, and in smiles are seen.  
Mayst thou, since years with rapid footsteps steal,  
While yet tis Autumn, Quiet's blessings feel ;  
Find peace within, while outward to thine eye  
Smile Nature's scenes beneath a mellow sky ;  
Till gently, kindly, bending to the grave,  
Age shall own joys, which youthful days ne'er gave !  
For me, alas, lives there a hope to warm,  
While clouds still blacken, and still grows the storm ?  
Malice, to me fore'er to be assign'd,  
Walks as my shade before me, or behind ;  
Around me draws lines mystical and deep,  
Whose frightful bounds I cannot overleap ;  
Palsies my feet, darts on my lips his spite,  
Rings in my ears ; and blasts my shuddering sight !  
Sometimes the blood-stain'd Usurer's form he wears ;  
Anon from priestly robes his cloven foot appears :  
A thousand varied shapes by turns he takes ;  
Spits libels poisonous as the tongues of snakes :  
And onward as his work incessant goes,  
Gives not a moment's respite to my woes !  
But e'en with bleeding heart and madden'd brain,  
See, yet I trifle with the Muse's strain !  
Dear as the life drops which this heart inspire,  
E'en in the midst of torments, is the lyre !



## LXXVII.

## CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS.



- If all the blood of all the chiefs, whose name  
Through ten long ages holds historic fame,  
Flow'd in thy fervid veins; what boots the gift,  
If to like heights thy mind it do not lift;  
And if it do not urge to rival deeds  
Of those, whom thy degenerate step succeeds?  
In clouds and darkness if thou wander'st on,  
From dawn to eve, and yet from eve to dawn;  
If still the vapoury blackness never quits
10. Thy footsteps, but with wings outspreading sits  
Hovering above thee, like a Fateful Sprite,  
Boots it, the stream once ran in speckless light?  
Departed Glory is an empty sound:  
Yet more: if not with present Greatness crown'd;  
If Riches lead not; if the staff of gold  
Do not thy feeble tottering steps uphold;  
Nor purple streams from Kings and Princes sprung,  
Nor glow of mind, nor eloquence of tongue,  
Nor purity of heart, nor virtuous life,
20. Can bear thee forward thro' the hopeless strife!  
Alone, unaided, never cheer'd, unseen;  
The massive curtain, Fame and thee between,  
Forever hangs unpiercable; the grave  
Yawns to receive thee; not a sound shall save  
Thy destined, hapless name: the crumbling earth  
Shall hurry on thee, as of equal worth;  
And into dust thou shalt dissolve; nor flower  
Shall blossom o'er thee for its transient hour:  
To soothe thy sprite no living stranger's care

30. To that cold spot the dew-hung gift shall bear;  
For thou art doom'd to toil; and toil in vain;  
To sing, and no one listen to thy strain;  
To waste thy days in thought; thy nights in fire;  
Yet be as one who never touch'd the lyre!  
A vapid, empty, dreaming, nameless elf;  
Beginning, lingering, ending all in self!  
While happier bards a race of glory run,  
Their wings all deck'd, and glittering to the sun,  
Thy destiny has spoke a gloomier lot;
40. Living, unknown; to be in death forgot!  
Ye mobs of wild caprice, who follow blind  
The paths a despot leader has assign'd,  
Who hear no sounds but at your leader's nod;  
Who see no flowers unnoticed by his rod;  
What is your senseless praise? An hollow blast,  
That conscious Genius, as it echoing past,  
Should, like an evil sprite, at distance cast!  
As quick to leave, as forward to pursue,  
It never yet was to the Muses true!
50. Untouch'd it heard the song of Milton ring  
Through earth and heaven from a celestial string;  
Yet glow'd with rapture at the doggrel chime  
Of wits who put their nonsense into rhyme!  
Enough! it grieves no more! the pang has ceased!  
From all this thirst of worldly smiles released,  
Deep in myself I wrap my hopes, and fears;  
Live in my own creation; and my tears  
And raptures offer to the tribes of light,  
That Fancy brings to my unclouded sight!
60. Let the storm howl without! twill howl in vain!  
All shall be song and sunshine in my brain!

24 April, 1822.

---

## A LITERARY OBITUARY.

1818.

- 1 July. Sir Thomas Bernard, Bart.  
 30 May. William Burdon Esq. aged 53, formerly of Emanuel College, Cambridge.  
 — At Bungay, Co. Suff. M.<sup>rs</sup> Eliz. Bonhote, aged 74.  
 — Hector Macneill Esq. poet, at Edinburgh.  
 30 May. Isaac Hawkins Browne, Esq. æt. 73.  
 — James Cobb Esq. Secretary at the East India House, æt. 72.  
 July. Matthew Gregory Lewis Esq.<sup>r</sup> æt. 48.  
 27 Aug. Rt. Honorable Warren Hastings, æt. 86.  
 11 Sept. James Bindley Esq. æt. 81.  
 14 Aug. Rev. Wm. Chafin, of Chettle, Co. Dors. æt. 87.  
 — Rev. Edw. Tew, Greek Scholar, aged 82.  
 1 Nov. Sir Samuel Romilly.  
 22 Dec. Sir Philip Francis, K. B.  
 24 Dec. F. W. Blagdon.

1819.

- 13 Jan. Dr. John Wolcot, M.D. known under the name of *Peter Pindar*.  
 5 May. John Giffard Esq. of Dublin, æt. 74.  
 — Henry Penruddock Wyndham Esq. æt. 83, at Salisbury.

- 5 May. Rev. James Bentley Gordon, of Killeghny, Co. Wexford, author of « *the History of the Irish Rebellion, 1798* » ( *etc.* )
- 19 May. George Cartwright Esq. aged 79.
- 1 Jan. At Birmingham, Mr. Wm. Harrod.
- 22 May. Joseph Moser Esq. aged 70.
- Richard Chaddick D.D. of Fulham: Hebraist.
- 20 July. John Playfair of Edinburgh, D.D. æt. 70.
- 29 June. Samuel Lysons Esq. F. A. S. aged 56.
- 1 Aug. James Forbes Esq. F. R. S.
- 17 May. Hugh Moises, M.D. aged 46.
- 31 Aug. Cyril Jackson, D.D. aged 73.
- 25 Aug. James Watt Esq. F. R. S. æt. 83.
- 2 Sept. Rev. Hen. Rowe, L. L. B. of Ringshall, Suffolk.
- 5 Oct. At Vevay, Lord Somerville; æt. 54.
- 25 Sept. Benj. Moseley, M.D.
- 8 Oct. Rev. Charles Edward Stewart, A. M. of Suffolk.
- 21 Oct. Hon. Frederic S. North Douglas, only son of Lord Glenbervie.
- 5 Nov. At Preston, Sussex, Rev. James Douglas, F. S. A.
- 30 Oct. John Bowles Esq. Barrister, aged 68.
- 6 Dec. David Jennings Esq. of Hawkhurst, Kent, *topographer*.
- 26 Nov. James Curry, M.D.
- 26 Nov. Thomas Marsham Esq. *botanist*.
- John Stackhouse, Esq. aged 79, *botanist*.
- George Hill, D.D. of St. Andrews.
- Richard Miles æt. 79, *numismatist*.
- 25 Dec. Rev. Anthony Freston, æt. 63.

1820.

- 26 Jan. Hen. Andrews, aged 76, *arithmetician*.

- 26 Feb. Rev. Rogers Ruding, B. D. F. S. A. *etc.*  
æ. 69.
- 11 Feb. Thomas Haweis, D.D. aged 86, at Bath.
- 13 Feb. At Dublin, Leonard Macnally, aged 68.
- 14 March. Michael Underwood, M.D. aged 84.
- 15 March. Eliz. widow of Capt. Edw. Howorth, R. N.  
aged 85.
- 8 April. At Pau in France, Thomas, Earl of Selkirk,  
æ. 49.
- 26 April. Edw. Topham Esq, æ. 69.
- 12 April. Arthur Young, Esq. æ. 79.
- 25 April. Patrick Colquhoun Esq. LL.D. aged 76.
- 15 April. At Rome, John Bell, Surgeon.
- 4 June. Rt. Hon. Hen. Grattan, æ. 74.
- 27 May. At Bath, Rev. Josiah Thomas, A. M. aged 60.
- 3 June. Sam. Pipe Wolferstan Esq. of Statfold, Co. Staff.  
aged 69.
- 19 June. Sir Joseph Banks, Bart. K. B. æ. 80.
- 27 June. Dr. Wm. Lort Mansell, Bishop of Bristol;  
æ. 69.
- William Richardson, D.D. of Clonfecle, Co.  
Antrim, aged 80.
- John Trusler, LL.D. aged 85.
- 2 July. Peter Dollond, *optician*, aged 90.
- 16 July. Dr. Bennet, Bishop of Cloyne, æ. 75.
- 22 July. At Edinburgh, Dr. John Murray, Chemical  
philosopher.
- 16 Sept. Rev. Cha. Edw. de Coetlogon, A. M.
- 15 Oct. John Hatsell Esq. æ. 78.
- 1 Oct. Wm. Fielding Esq. aged 73.
- 21 Nov. Earl of Malmsbury, æ. 75.
- 17 Nov. Rev. Wm. Tooke, F. R. S., aged 76.
- 12 Nov. Wm. Hayley Esq. aged 75.
- 22 Oct. At Manchester, Mr. Thomas Barritt, Antiquary;  
æ. 77.

- Nov. Richard Whalley Bridgman Esq. æt. 59.  
 18 Nov. Prof. Young of Glasgow.  
 20. Sept. Mr. John Dawson, of Sedbergh, in York-  
           shire, *mathematician*, æt. 86.  
 4 Dec. Mr. Sam. Rousseau, printer, aged 57.  
 27 Nov. Hen. Jermyn Esq. of Sibton, Suffolk, æt. 53.  
 16 Dec. Sir Geo. Onesiphorus Paul, Bart.  
 2 April. Wm. Parnell Esq. M. P.

## 1821.

- 18 Jan. Charles Runnington, Sergt. at Law, æt. 70.  
 7 Jan. Mrs. John Hunter, poetess, æt. 70.  
 11 Feb. Adam Walker, Lecturer in Natural Philosophy,  
           aged 90.  
 12 Jan. Sir John Macpherson Bart.  
 5 March. At an advanced age, Richard Twiss Esq.  
 12 March. At Florence, Capt. Wm. Rt. Broughton, R. N.  
 21 March. Michael Bryan Esq. æt. 64, author of the  
           *Dictionary of Painters*.  
 9 April. At Whitby, Yorkshire, Tho. Bateman, M.D.  
           æt. 43.  
 2 May. Mrs. Piozzi, aged 82.  
 15 May. John Bonnycastle Esq. Mathematician.  
 13 May. Wm. Stevenson, F.S.A. æt. 72, Printer at  
           Norwich.  
 30 May. Earl of Sheffield, æt. 82.  
       — James Gregory M.D. at Edinburgh, aged 68.  
       — Rev. Tho. Scott, of Aston-Sandford, Co. Bucks.  
 31 May. At Cheshunt, Herts, Oliver Cromwell Esq. aged 79.  
 24 June. Sir Francis Milman, Bt. M.D. æt. 75.  
 18 June. James Carmichael Smyth, M.D. æt. 80.  
       — Rev. W. P. Warburton, of Lydd, Kent, aged 60.  
 21 July. Tho. Morgan, LL.D. æt. 69. Dissenting Minister.  
 1 Aug. Mrs. Eliz. Inchbald, aged 66.



- John Scott, author of *Letters from France, etc.*,  
killed in a duel by Mr. Christie.
- 9 July. Rev. Peter Gandolph, Roman Catholic Priest.  
— Mr John Ballantyne, Printer of Edinburgh.
- 6 Sept. Rev. Vicesimus Knox, D.D. æt. 69.
- 16 Aug. Francis Hargrave, Esq. Barrister, æt. 81.
- 4 Oct. John Rennie, Esq. the celebrated Engineer,  
æt. 64.
- 12 Oct. Wm. Angus, *engraver*, aged 69.
- 16 Sept. At Worcester, James Ross, *engraver*, æt. 76.
- 2 Oct. At Oxford, Joseph Harper Esq. D.C.L.
- 17 Nov. Rear Adm. James Burney, F. R. S. æt. 72.
- 27 Oct. At Norwich Edw. Rigby, M.D. æt. 74.
- 15 Nov. At Dublin, John Barrett, D.D.
- 4 Dec. Lord Henniker, æt. 70.
- 4 Dec. James Perry Esq. Editor of the Morning Chronicle, aged 65.
- 19 Sept. Rev. John Malham, æt. 75.
- 23 Nov. Sir James Mansfield, Kt. æt. 88.
- 9 Dec. Mary, relict of Rev. Geo. Sewel, daughter of  
Sir Wm. Young, Bt.

1822.

- Jan. George Isted Esq.
- 23 Feb. James Boswell Esq.
- 9 March. Dr. Edw. Daniel Clarke, Librarian of Cambridge University Library, the celebrated Traveller, aged 54.
-

---



---

## THE ANTI-CRITIC.

AUGUST 1821. — MARCH 1822.

By SIR EGERTON BRYDGES, Bart.

---

### CONTENTS.

|                                                                                    | <i>Page</i> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| ART. I. <i>Introductory. Character of Modern Criticism, .....</i>                  | 1           |
| — II. <i>On the Prevailing English Opinions of Poetry, .....</i>                   | 4           |
| — III. <i>Barnabee's Journal by Richard Brathwait: Edit. by J. Haslewood, ....</i> | 29          |
| — IV. <i>Petrarch's Industry, .....</i>                                            | 38          |
| — V. <i>Milton's self confidence, .....</i>                                        | 39          |
| — VI. <i>Young's Universal Passion, .....</i>                                      | 40          |
| — VII. <i>Gray's Pursuits, and Habits, .....</i>                                   | 40          |
| — VIII. <i>Poetry, .....</i>                                                       | 45          |
| — IX. <i>Cowper, .....</i>                                                         | 47          |
| — X. <i>Censures of Pope, .....</i>                                                | 48          |
| — XI. <i>True Principles of Poetry, .....</i>                                      | 49          |
| — XII. <i>Proper Objects of Authors, .....</i>                                     | 57          |
| — XIII. <i>Rousseau, .....</i>                                                     | 64          |
| — XIV. <i>Fame finally just, .....</i>                                             | 65          |
| — XV. <i>Sympathy in the sentiments and Conditions of Life, .....</i>              | 67          |
| — XVI. <i>Praise of Scott's Novels; — and of love of reading, .....</i>            | 68          |

|            |                                                                        | Page |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| ART. XVII. | <i>Lake of Geneva</i> , .....                                          | 69   |
| — XVIII.   | <i>Beattie's Minstrel</i> , .....                                      | 70   |
| — XIX.     | <i>Cowper no Inventor</i> , .....                                      | 77   |
| — XX.      | <i>On Moral and Domestic Poetry</i> , ..                               | 80   |
| — XXI.     | <i>Exaggeration of Critical Censure</i> , ..                           | 83   |
| — XXII.    | <i>Busy and Intriguing Authors</i> , ....                              | 84   |
| — XXIII.   | <i>Genius of Burns</i> , .....                                         | 85   |
| — XXIV.    | <i>Dr. Joseph Warton</i> , .....                                       | 89   |
| — XXV.     | <i>Thomas Warton</i> , .....                                           | 92   |
| — XXVI.    | <i>Rarity of Good Poets</i> , .....                                    | 96   |
| — XXVII.   | <i>Shenstone</i> , .....                                               | 100  |
| — XXVIII.  | <i>Goldsmith</i> , .....                                               | 102  |
| — XXVIII.* | <i>Bibliomania</i> , .....                                             | 116  |
| — XXIX.    | <i>Qualities of the Historian and Poet</i><br><i>different</i> , ..... | 118  |
| — XXXI.    | <i>Spenser</i> , .....                                                 | 120  |
| — XXXII.   | <i>Demi-Ancients</i> , .....                                           | 120  |
| — XXXIII.  | <i>Hume</i> , .....                                                    | 122  |
| — XXXIV.   | <i>Original Writers</i> , .....                                        | 123  |
| — XXXV.    | <i>Travellers</i> , .....                                              | 124  |
| — XXXVI.   | <i>Fame</i> , .....                                                    | 125  |
| — XXXVII.  | <i>Philosophers and Poets</i> , .....                                  | 126  |
| — XXXVIII. | <i>Birth</i> , .....                                                   | 127  |
| — XXXIX.   | <i>The Same</i> , .....                                                | 128  |
| — XL.      | — <i>House of Bourbon</i> , ....                                       | 129  |
| — XLI.     | <i>The Same</i> , .....                                                | 130  |
| — XLII.    | <i>Memoirs</i> , .....                                                 | 131  |
| — XLIII.   | <i>Copyright</i> , .....                                               | 132  |
| — XLIV.    | <i>La Fontaine</i> , .....                                             | 133  |
| — XLV.     | <i>Fragment of an Inscription</i> , .....                              | 135  |
| — XLVI.    | <i>A Poetical Fragment. Alphonso</i> , ..                              | 146  |
| — XLVII.   | <i>Poems of M. A. Flaminus</i> , .....                                 | 150  |
| — XLVIII.  | <i>Tragic Tales. Coningsby and Broken-</i><br><i>hurst</i> , .....     | 156  |

|                                                                                   | <i>Page</i> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| ART. XLVIII.* <i>Hall of Hellingsley</i> , .....                                  | 164         |
| — XLIX. <i>The Fountain of Helicon</i> , .....                                    | 166         |
| — L. <i>Egotisms</i> , .....                                                      | 168         |
| — LI. <i>Egotisms continued</i> , .....                                           | 170         |
| — LII. <i>Sir Ralph Willoughby</i> , .....                                        | 173         |
| — LIII. <i>Le-Forester</i> , .....                                                | 177         |
| — LIV. <i>Arthur Fitzalbini</i> , .....                                           | 181         |
| — LV. <i>Mary de Clifford</i> , .....                                             | 183         |
| — LVI. <i>Literary distinction the result of in-</i><br><i>trigue</i> , .....     | 187         |
| — LVII. <i>Prose Fictions classed; with their</i><br><i>uses</i> , .....          | 188         |
| — LVIII. <i>Inscriptions</i> , .....                                              | 191         |
| — LVIII.* <i>Cenotaph, Wootton</i> , .....                                        | 194         |
| — LIX. <i>Cenotaph, Ickham</i> , .....                                            | 197         |
| — LX. <i>Cenotaph, Horton</i> , .....                                             | 199         |
| — LXI. <i>Inscription, Westcliffe</i> , .....                                     | 200         |
| — LXII. <i>Inscription, D.<sup>o</sup></i> , .....                                | 201         |
| — LXIII. <i>Inscription, Ickham</i> , .....                                       | 202         |
| — LXIV. <i>Inscription, Chester</i> , .....                                       | 203         |
| — LXV. <i>Inscription, Ridge-Hertfordshire</i> , ..                               | 204         |
| — LXVI. <i>Inscription, Little Gaddesden</i> , .....                              | 205         |
| — LXVII. <i>Memoirs of Gibbon Family</i> , .....                                  | 206         |
| — LXVIII. <i>Lord Chancellor Hardwicke</i> , .....                                | 225         |
| — LXIX. <i>Consolation, a Poem, by Quillinan</i> , ..                             | 228         |
| — LXX. <i>Lines to the Memory of E. W.</i><br><i>Brydges, by the Same</i> , ..... | 233         |
| — LXXI. <i>Stanzas written at Sudely Castle</i> , ...                             | 237         |
| — LXXII. <i>Epitaph, Penshurst</i> , .....                                        | 240         |
| — LXXIII. <i>Rousseau</i> , .....                                                 | 242         |
| — LXXVI. <i>Mrs. Montagu</i> , .....                                              | 244         |

|                                                               | <i>Page</i> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| LXXV. <i>Poetical Preface to Sylvan Wanderer, . . .</i>       | 250         |
| LXXVI. <i>Poetical Address to Rev. Charles Powlett, . . .</i> | 253         |
| LXXVII. <i>Concluding Reflections , a Poem , . . . . .</i>    | 255         |

---

## ADVERTISEMENT.

On Oct. 29, 1821 was published :

(By Mess.<sup>rs</sup> Longman and Co. London)

In 3 vol. 12.<sup>o</sup>

## THE HALL OF HELLINGSLEY;

## A TALE.

By Sir ECERTON BRYDGES, Bar.<sup>t</sup>

*The time, at which the events of this Tale are supposed to have happened, was the Reign of King James I, when a period of pusillanimous peace, succeeding an age of gallantry and adventure, gave occasion to great excesses in the internal police of the kingdom. Then it was that many of the younger sons of Great Houses, left without employment, and driven from the Court by Scotch Favouritism, retired into the Country to follow the Chace, and other sports of the Field; and to indulge in a licentious hospitality, which the want of adequate means to support, led to all sorts of irregularity and violence.*

*This was a crisis, which made a rapid inroad upon the power and glory of the old English Feudal and Historical Families. Then the harvest-men of the Eighth Harry's Reformation concentrated and confirmed their power. The Veres, the Greys, the Cliffords, the Berkeleys, the Percys, the Nevilles, etc. were in a rapid state of decadence.*

*To bring forward characters out of this class of society, and to invest them with personal qualities sufficiently eminent to engage the interest of those whose minds are fitted to enjoy the enthusiasm of poetical delineation;*



who love those energies of sentiment, and vivacities of conflicting emotion, which partake of the colours of Romance, may, it is hoped, be considered as an offering of instructive amusement to those refined readers, who derive refreshment from setting their fancies afloat from the vapid recurrence of the scenes of daily life.

The epoch chosen was an epoch at once of superstition, of poetry, and of learning, which gives room for the portraiture of characters bold and striking, yet polished. Sentiment and description, unembodied and undramatised, are apt to be tedious. But when the gradual development of a story skilfully complicated connects itself with those sentiments and descriptions, it raises a temperament in which they are readily and eagerly received. The sentiments and descriptions therefore, in which the characters introduced abound, will not, it is trusted, be deemed out of place.

The Author has not the weakness to hint, or to suppose, that the style and mode which he has chosen, are exclusively desirable. He only argues, that it is one of the diversified modes, which may fairly be put in use for the innocent exercise of the varied powers of the human mind. To study the characters of more familiar life, and be aided in withdrawing the veil from the movements by which the conflict of ordinary society is carried on, may justly intermingle itself among the changing occupations of the inquisitive intellect. But unhappily, they who take up this taste, have no mercy for any other. Nothing is endurable by them, which they do not consider practical: a word of very indefinite meaning, which they bend to their own narrow purposes. The influence of Imagination, in "breaking the twilight gloom of life," has been nobly described by Gray. And it is by the glow of visionary forms, that we can give energy to the flatness of Reality!

*All are condemned to the lassitudes and the sufferings of life. To soothe the hour of pain, and relieve the intrusion of sorrow, is to be a public benefactor: — but it must be done by virtuous means; by ameliorating the heart; by aiding the pure fancy; and by elevating the understanding. To call the mind to » fresh woods and pastures new; » to people it with new company, and open a gallery of new portraits, infuses a new impulse, and revived force to the worn ideas.*

*Let the fate of this Tale be what it may, the Public cannot rob the Author of the pleasure already received from the composition of it!*

27 April, 1822.

---

In a few days will appear:

JULIETTA:

A TALE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL ITALIAN

OF LUIGI DA PORTO.

By F. D. S. Esq.<sup>r</sup>

---

*This scarce and beautiful Tale is the foundation of Shakespear's ROMEO AND JULIET. The original has been reprinted by Mr. Holwell Carr, as his contribution to the Roxburghe Club. The Translation forms Art. I. of the POLYANTHEA.*

---

# NOTICE CRITIQUE

SUR UN ROMAN

INTITULÉ

## THE HALL OF HELLINGSLEY.



*The Hall of Hellingsley*, a Tale ; by Sir Egerton Brydges , Bar.<sup>t</sup> 3 vol. 12.<sup>o</sup> London, Longman etc. ( October 29 ) 1821.

Le Château de Hellingsley , *Roman* ; par Sir Egerton Brydges, baronet, 3 vol. in-12.<sup>o</sup> Londres chez Longman , etc. ( 29 Octobre ) 1821.



ON a vu , depuis quelque temps , des littérateurs distingués s'occuper de préférence à écrire des Contes ou des Romans. Cette entreprise n'est pas sans danger ; car un ouvrage médiocre peut porter un coup fatal à la réputation d'un auteur , que ses talens autoriseroient à des prétentions plus élevées. Mais , il faut alors qu'il ait un juste sentiment de ses forces , et que son jugement ne soit point influencé par celui d'une multitude capricieuse , dont le goût est corrompu par des ouvrages destinés particulièrement à frapper l'imagination et à produire des sensations fortes. Les personnes qui ne prisent que l'éclat

d'un faux coloris , trouvent insipides et plates les couleurs simples de la vérité. Celle-ci, cependant (quelque contradiction que des esprits superficiels pussent trouver dans cette assertion), celle-ci, prise dans le sens le plus étendu , peut tout autant servir de base à des ouvrages d'imagination qu'à des discussions savantes. Les sujets qu'on traite ne sont pas moins susceptibles de développement , soit qu'on les considère sous le rapport des faits , soit qu'on y donne carrière à son imagination ; mais lorsqu'on a recours à cette dernière pour faire ressortir la vérité , il ne faut ni passer trop rapidement sur les faits , ni s'étendre longuement sur ceux que la biographie et l'histoire font déjà suffisamment connoître. L'auteur doit présenter les observations qu'une sensibilité active et un esprit brillant sait tirer de son sujet ; car des faits particuliers ne sont qu'une matière inerte, qui , en l'empêchant de s'élever aux vérités générales, éloignent celui qui ne raconte que des faits , de cette hauteur d'où l'on peut contempler la vérité dans tout son éclat.

C'est à ces caractères que nous pouvons reconnoître l'auteur du genre le plus élevé , et le plus fertile en invention, en fait de romans ou de fictions ; celui qui s'abandonne avec confiance à cette puissance

« Qui donne une existence et un nom à des êtres idéaux et presque aériens. » (\*)

L'époque comprise dans ce récit est celle du règne de Jaques I.<sup>er</sup> : le lieu de la scène est un des comtés de l'ouest. L'auteur, accoutumé à considérer avec une sorte d'enthousiasme une période où la gloire de l'aristocratie féodale n'étoit pas encore entièrement éteinte , développe son sujet, ses caractères , le tableau du pays et des événemens d'une manière très-animée et analogue à son ca-

(\*) « Which gives to airy nothing  
A local habitation and a name. »

ractère. Un Roman qu'il a publié à l'âge de 27 ans, et celui qu'il donne aujourd'hui, qu'il en a atteint 59, peuvent faire juger de l'identité de sa manière de sentir dans ces deux époques, puisque les couleurs de ces productions, présentant les mêmes teintes, montrent qu'elles sont celles mêmes de son esprit.

Il y a cependant une grande différence entre ces ouvrages d'imagination et ceux du même genre que l'auteur a déjà fait paroître. Jusqu'ici, on pouvoit à peine dire que ses romans présentassent un plan, tandis que celui de l'ouvrage actuel est profondément combiné et développé successivement, sans interruption, depuis le commencement jusqu'à la fin. C'est une histoire mystérieuse, que les diverses classes de lecteurs jugeront sans doute d'une manière différente, suivant le plus ou le moins de probabilité et d'intérêt qu'ils y trouveront, d'après leurs dispositions respectives.

Il n'est que trop vrai que les mœurs du temps de Jaques I.<sup>er</sup> furent souillées par des actes de violence et d'injustice, que les cadets de plusieurs des grandes familles étoient alors dans un véritable état de pauvreté, et que, livrés à eux-mêmes, sans emploi, et dans un temps où le service public ne leur offroit aucune ressource, vivant à peu de distance d'une époque où l'on faisoit un cas particulier de la galanterie et des aventures extraordinaires, ils n'étoient que trop disposés à se livrer à une conduite licentieuse, que nos mœurs actuelles sont bien loin d'autoriser; mais un tel état de choses peut fournir un grand nombre d'incidens propres à exciter une vive émotion et à fixer le lecteur, en intéressant son cœur et en donnant de l'exercice à son imagination.

Les objets qui sont constamment sous nos yeux, cessent d'exciter notre sensibilité et de reveiller nos idées. Aussi le but d'une fiction est-il de nous soustraire à l'empire de quelqu'objet qui nous occupe exclusivement, ou à

l'abattement que produit en nous une suite d'idées sombres. Nous n'avons pas besoin qu'on nous offre des tableaux qui se présentent à nous à chaque instant ; il nous faut de la nouveauté , et des occasions d'exercer notre énergie. Il faut qu'on nous peigne le passé avec autant de force et de vérité que s'il n'eût pas cessé d'exister ; et que ce qui n'est qu'idéal, s'offre à nous sous l'apparence de la réalité.

C'est là le but que s'est proposé l'auteur de ce Roman. Les lecteurs décideront s'il a réussi ou non , suivant que leurs idées sympathiseront avec les siennes. Il s'est peint dans cet ouvrage de son imagination , qui lui paroît mériter la préférence sur tous les autres ouvrages sortis de sa plume. (\*)

(\*) Voyez la Notice Critique du Roman de Coningsby par le même Auteur, *Bibliothèque Universelle*, Avril, 1822.

---









Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.  
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide  
Treatment Date: March 2009

## **PreservationTechnologies**

**A WORLD LEADER IN COLLECTIONS PRESERVATION**

111 Thomson Park Drive  
Cranberry Township, PA 16066  
(724) 779-2111



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 389 473 3

